

Welcome To San Diego



*Guide
Book*



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Welcome to San Diego!



Welcome to San Diego. San Diego is famous for its beautiful beaches and parks, the San Diego Zoo, military bases and a great climate.



San Diego Facts

- San Diego County is located in the most southwestern part of the country. It shares a border with Mexico. The Pacific Ocean is its western border.
- There are 18 cities and many other communities in San Diego County. One of these cities is San Diego.
- Close to three million people live in San Diego County. About 1,223,400 people live in the city of San Diego.
- The climate varies in different parts of the county. There is little difference between the high and low temperatures. The days can get warm (75-80 degrees Fahrenheit/23-26 degrees Celsius) during the summer months. During the winter months of December to February, the nights are cool (40-55 degrees Fahrenheit/4-13 degrees Celsius) and the days are mild (65-70 degrees Fahrenheit/18-21 degrees Celsius).
- The temperature has reached below freezing only a few times in the city's history. It normally does not snow in the city of San Diego. It does sometimes reach freezing in the east county. It does snow in the mountains in east county.
- It rains an average of ten inches a year, mostly between November and April.
- San Diego mornings sometimes start with a "marine layer," a thick fog that comes from the ocean. It is often gone by the middle of the day. Marine layers are more common during the spring and summer.
- San Diego sometimes has very hot and dry winds that come from the desert. These are called "Santa Ana" winds.

U.S. and San Diego History

Columbus discovered the continent of North America in 1492. The first European settlers arrived in 1607. Their first home was in Jamestown, Virginia. It was the first colony of the new “Americans.”

Indians lived on this continent for many centuries before the arrival of Europeans. The Indians, today known as “Native Americans,” helped the settlers during the first hard years. Juan Cabrillo, a Portuguese explorer, discovered California in 1542. Cabrillo explored the area known today as San Diego.



Junipero Serra, a Franciscan monk, built the first mission in San Diego in 1769. The missions were built to bring the Christian religion to the local Indians.

California and Mexico belonged to Spain until 1821. The Mexicans won their war for independence against Spain in 1821. At the time, California was part of Mexico. Mexico lost much of its land, including California, to the United States during the Mexican-American war in 1848. California became the 31st state of the United States in 1850.

Slowly, more and more people came to this country to look for new opportunities and freedom. Many of these people were not treated fairly in their home countries because of their religious and political beliefs. Others came here seeking better jobs.

Today, the United States is a large, diverse country. Over 290 million persons live in the U.S., according to U.S. Census estimates. The U.S. has differences in geography and climates. Americans have many different racial and ethnic backgrounds. They have a variety of religious beliefs and values.

What You Can Expect As You Resettle

Resettlement is a first step to becoming a permanent resident and a United States citizen. As a refugee, you may have lost everything. In the United States, you are offered a chance to start over and rebuild your life. Starting over may not be easy, but it can be done. You can succeed! You bring the gifts of your special talents, background, culture and courage.



Resettling in San Diego

Your airline arrival information, name, family size and makeup were given to a local case manager by the Washington, D.C. Operations Office. Your case manager then contacted your anchor relatives to let them know about your arrival.

If you are a free case, your case manager will find a low-cost apartment for you. This will help when you start paying your own bills. Your first apartment is a starting point. You can move when you have saved more money, but keep in mind that housing in San Diego is very expensive.

You will find life here to be different from life in your homeland. Your happiness in San Diego will depend on getting along well with your American neighbors. It will also depend on following American laws and regulations.

Important Information For Living in the U.S.

The following is a list of important information you should try to remember while living in the United States. More details will be described later in the guidebook.

- Make sure you have the correct U.S. travel documents if you cross an international border, such as Mexico's. If you do not have the correct documents, you may not be permitted to re-enter the country.

- You need a driver's license to drive a car. You **cannot drive** a car without one. A driver's license is easy to get, even if you do not speak English. Also, you can take an interpreter with you to take the driving test.
- Get car insurance if you buy a car. You **must have car insurance** before driving your car anywhere. You could go to jail and get an expensive fine if you drive without insurance.
- The police may stop you for not following driving rules. They will give you a "ticket." The ticket states an amount of money you must pay as a penalty or fine. If you do not pay the fine on time, you may go to jail or lose your license. You also will have a bad driving record. The cost will keep increasing until the ticket is paid.



- Look for and respect signs posted around your home, on the street, or wherever you go. Examples are "No Smoking," "No Trespassing (means do not walk here)," "Keep Off the Grass" and "No Littering (means do not drop papers or trash on the ground)."



- Obey the rules and regulations at your apartment building.
- Respect your neighbors by not making too much noise in your apartment. Americans generally go to bed early if they work early in the morning. If you make too much noise, your neighbors call and report the noise to the apartment manager or call the police. The police may come to your apartment and give you a ticket to pay a fine for "disturbing the peace."



- Sometimes you can keep pets, such as dogs and cats, in apartments. Ask your apartment manager if you can. Dogs must be kept on a leash when they are outside. Clean up dog feces when you walk your dog in the neighborhood and parks. Follow the laws about taking good care of pets.

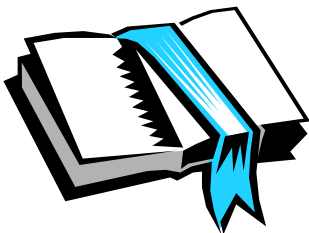


- There is a U.S. law against being drunk in public. Never drive your car if you have been drinking. You can be arrested and go to jail.



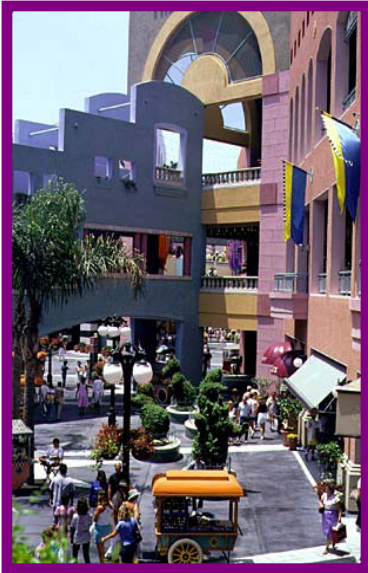
- You must pay the prices shown for items at American stores. You cannot bargain to a lower price at a store. You may bargain for a lower price if you buy something from a person, or if you buy a car or home. You must pay for everything before leaving a store. Taking an item without paying for it is called shoplifting. Shoplifting is a serious crime in the U.S. Never open packages or taste food before you pay for them.

-
- Report a crime, fire or other emergency immediately. Learn how to quickly find emergency phone numbers. Police officers are here to protect and serve the public. They are not connected to the military and are different from security officers.
 - For emergencies, dial 911 on your telephone.



- Feel free to practice your faith and follow your beliefs. Freedom of religion is a basic part of American life. Americans usually practice their faith and traditions in their home with their family or in a place of worship.
- Some of your religious practices may be against the law in the U.S. for reasons of health, sanitation or safety. For example, it is generally not permitted to light incense or candles in a hospital. In most states, funerals must be held in funeral homes or mortuaries.
- You are not required to take part in the religious activities of your American friends or sponsors. If you do not want to take part, say a polite but firm "No thank you."

Remember these tips:



- Keep an “open mind” by avoiding making rushed judgments.
- Make every effort to learn and speak English.
- Attempt to understand American culture.
- Take part in American life.
- Get a job as soon as possible. Make plans for a better job in the future.
- Understand that the first months of resettlement are often very difficult. For that reason, your case manager and other staff in your resettlement agency are here to help you through this period of change.
- Remember how far you have come, not how far you have to go.

Where to Find Help

- California Department of Fair Employment and Housing—1-800-884-1684, (TTY*) 1-800-700-2320, www.dfeh.ca.gov
- Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS), National Customer Service (formerly INS)—1-800-375-5283, (TTY*) 1-800-767-1833, www.immigration.gov
- Office of Special Counsel for Immigration Related Unfair Employment Practices—1-800-255-7688, (TTY*) 1-800-237-2515, www.usdoj.gov/crt/osc

**For the hearing impaired*

Money Management



Resettlement Funds

“**R**esettlement funds” are given to you by the United States government. This money is given to help you begin to support yourself and your family. Case managers will work to help you be independent. There is a limit to the amount of money you and your family can receive. Your case manager **cannot** make **special arrangements** to get extra money. If you have questions about resettlement funds, talk to your case manager.

Money Management

Money and financial practices in the United States may be different than those in your country of origin. You will not have problems if you plan carefully and learn about American money. American money can be either paper (bills) or metal (coins). It is often called “cash.”



- There are 100 cents in a dollar.
- A **one-cent coin** is called a penny. One cent is written .01 or 1¢
- A **five-cent coin** is called a nickel. Five cents is written .05 or 5¢
- A **ten-cent coin** is called a dime. Ten cents is written .10 or 10¢
- A **twenty-five cent coin** is called a quarter. Twenty-five cents is written .25 or 25¢
- The **fifty-cent coin** is called a half-dollar. Fifty cents is written .50 or 50¢
- The **one hundred cent coin** is called a dollar. One hundred cents is written \$1.00

A bill is the word used for paper money. Bills are printed in amounts of 1, 5, 10, 20, 50 and 100 dollars. All bills in all amounts are the same color—green. Amounts are written like this:



1 dollar: \$1.00	20 dollars: \$20.00
5 dollars: \$5.00	50 dollars: \$50.00
10 dollars: \$10.00	100 dollars: \$100.00

Be careful when you count money in public. Do not invite thieves to steal from you!

Living Expenses

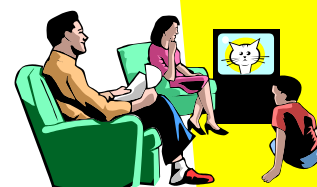
Living expenses are the most important costs to pay. The costs are often very large. It is important to plan how to spend your money when you do not have very much money.



Always consider your “fixed expenses” first.

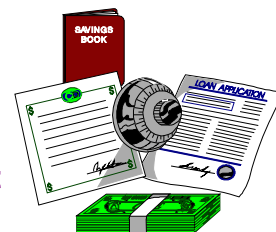
Here are some examples of fixed expenses:

- **Rent:** Rent is usually the largest cost. It should be the most important.
- **Utilities:** Electricity, gas, water and garbage collection are utilities that may or may not be part of the money you pay for rent. Sometimes you might have to pay for one or more of these in addition to rent. The cost is high for using electricity, gas, heating and air conditioning.
- **Food:** Compare foods to find the ones that give more quality for the best price. Make a shopping list before you go shopping. A list helps you remember the things you really need to buy. It also helps you spend less money and saves time (See the section on “Nutrition and Shopping for Food”).
- **Transportation:** Think about the cost of travel to and from your job each day, shopping trips and other regular transportation needs.
- **Telephone:** You must pay for telephone service. Remember that long distance calls can be expensive! You can also use a “phone card” to make calls without using cash. You can buy a “prepaid” phone card or you can get one where you pay later when you get a bill. Some phone card companies will want you to pay a service charge when you use their cards.
- **Cable TV:** This can be a luxury in many cases, and you may not need it. You can watch non-cable television for free.



Banks

It is important to save money for your future needs. Think about putting your money in a government-insured bank. The government guarantees you will not lose your money, even due to fire or theft.



Here is some information about banks:

- Opening a bank account is easy. You need two things:
 - Identification with a photo, such as a passport
 - A check, money order or cash to put in the new account
- At some banks, you must keep a certain amount of money in a savings or checking account. If your account falls below that amount, you might have to pay a service charge.
- It is important to have enough money in your checking account when you write a check. There is an extra cost (around \$15-\$25) if your account does not have enough money for a check you write.
- You must “endorse” a check to get money from it. For example, if someone writes a check to you, you can get cash from this check by signing your name on the back of it. This is called endorsing. Do not endorse your check until you are in the bank.
- Automatic Teller Machines (also known as ATM’s) and ATM cards are available for your use. With an ATM card, you can go to the ATM machine at any time to put money in or take money out of the bank. Ask about getting an ATM card at your bank.
- You can exchange money from your country of origin at a bank or large international airport.



IDA

There is a special account you can open to help you get loans in the future. It is called an Individual Development Account (IDA). You can open an IDA with your resettlement agency.

Paying Bills

It is important to pay your bills on time. This will help you to have a good credit report. Bills can be paid with a money order or check. Money orders are like checks. You can buy them at the post office, bank and some stores. The cost is lowest at the post office. You must pay for the money order in cash.

What Is Credit?

Credit is a promise to pay for a purchase at a later date. You can pay a part of the total cost each month, but you will have to pay extra money called “interest.”

Credit Cards

Many Americans use credit cards to pay for the things they buy. You will need a credit card to rent a car. Sometimes one is needed to get a hotel room. MasterCard and Visa are the most common credit card companies.

Credit cards allow you to buy things without having cash in your pocket. This can make things you want to buy seem to be “free.” Be sure you have enough money in the bank to pay

for the things you buy with a credit card. You will need to pay the credit card company when it sends a bill to you. Paying your credit card bills on time will help you have a good credit report. A good credit report can help you get a loan with a lower interest rate. This will help you save money on big purchases such as a car or home.



Financial Aid

Financial aid programs are available for the following:

- Low-income families
- Unemployed heads of households
- Other people in need

The CalWORKS program provides the following to eligible persons:

- Cash assistance
- Food
- Medical coverage

Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) is available to you as a refugee or asylee. You can get up to eight months of RCA. It is managed by your resettlement agency.

After eight months of RCA, you may still be able to get CalWORKS.

To apply for CalWORKS (through your resettlement agency), go to the following location:

**Health and Human Services Agency
Kearny Mesa Family Resource Center**
5201 Ruffin Road, Suite K
San Diego, CA 92123
(858) 565-5598

The **Refugee Employment Service** will also help you find a job, if you are still eligible.

Loans

A loan is an amount of money you borrow that needs to be given back in one or more payments. Beware of high-cost small loans, pawnbrokers, and rent-to-own stores. These may cost you a lot more money than you borrow. Be sure to read loan papers all the way through before signing them. Look not only at the monthly payment, but also at the interest rate.



Compare the interest rate to the following:

- Number of payments
- Amount of fees added to the loan
- Total amount you will repay

Always shop around for the best deal on a loan.

If you do not have enough money (cash) to cover the cost of a large purchase, like a car or house, you will need to get a loan.

Safety



Identification Safety

It is important to carry your Alien Registration Card (I-94) wherever you go.

Show this document at the following times:

- When a public official asks you for identification
- When making financial transactions, such as cashing a check or opening a bank savings or checking account



Later, you will also receive a Social Security Card. You will need the card to apply for a job and for other service needs.

General Safety

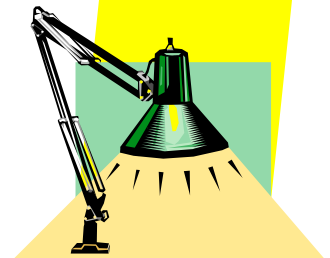
No matter where you are, you should take basic safety precautions:

- Lock the doors on your car and home.
- Never carry large amounts of cash.
- Be aware of things around you.
- Avoid dark or unlighted places where others cannot easily see you.
- Try not to walk alone at night.
- Don't let your children play outside at night. It is dangerous for them to be outside alone after dark. Always know where they are. Know their friends.
- Be aware of strangers. Teach your children not to accept rides or gifts from people they do not know. Women should be careful around men they do not know.

Home Safety

The following are general home safety tips:

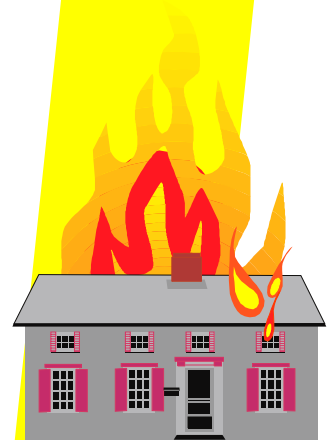
- Lock your doors even when you are in your home.
- Lock your windows and doors at night or when you leave your home. Keep valuables away from windows.
- Before opening your door, ask people to tell you who they are.
- Children should not open the door to strangers. Put a list of names near the door, so children know who is allowed in the home. Give your children rules about answering the door.
- If a sales person comes to your door, make sure you know what you are buying or signing. If needed, ask someone to help you read any paper to be signed.
- Keep large amounts of money in a bank, not at home.
- Turn on a lamp in a room that can be seen from the outside of your apartment if you will be away from home at night or for a long time.



Fire Safety

The following are general fire safety tips:

- Know how to protect yourself and your children in case of fire.
 - If your clothes are on fire, you should: **stop, drop and roll**. Cover your face, drop to your knees and roll over on the part of your clothing that is on fire. Keep rolling until the fire is out.
 - Another way to act during a fire is to **get low and go**. When there is fire, there is smoke and heat. Smoke and heat rises; therefore, you must get low, next to the floor, and crawl to keep away from most of the smoke and heat.
- Be sure everyone living in the house knows the fastest way to get out in case of a fire.
- Be sure your furnace works well to prevent fire and carbon monoxide poisoning.



- Never use electrical appliances near water, such as a bathtub or shower.
- Keep appliances away from small children. Tell children about the dangers of electrical outlets, stove burners, matches and candles.
- Turn off irons, toasters or heaters if you leave the room or leave the house, even for a brief period. The refrigerator and a lamp can stay turned on.
- Do not store gasoline or other substances that can burn quickly inside your home.
- Never have an **open fire** inside your home. If there is a fireplace, use a fireplace screen. Be sure the chimney is open and clean. Never burn charcoal inside your home. Indoor charcoal burning can lead to poisoning and death!
- **Make sure your smoke detector/alarm is working properly. There is a law that states you must have one and it must work.**



Cleaning Supplies Safety

The following are general safety tips for cleaning supplies:



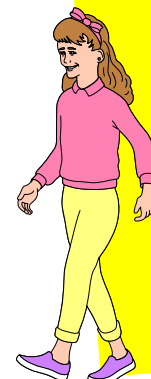
- Store cleaning supplies in closed containers and away from children. Most cleaning products are poisonous.
- Never mix cleaning products together. Such mixtures will cause very dangerous fumes.



Safety When You Walk

The following are safety tips for walking:

- When you go for a walk, tell someone where you are going and when you think you will return.
- Walk only in places where people are allowed to walk.
- Do not ride in a car with strangers.

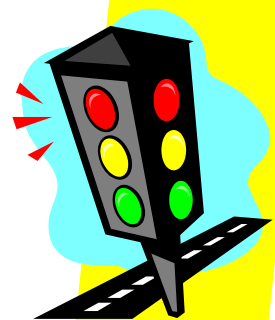


Crossing Streets

- Cross the street at a corner. Crossing in the middle of the street (“jaywalking”) is illegal.
- Look both ways before crossing the street. Watch for cars turning corners.

Traffic Lights

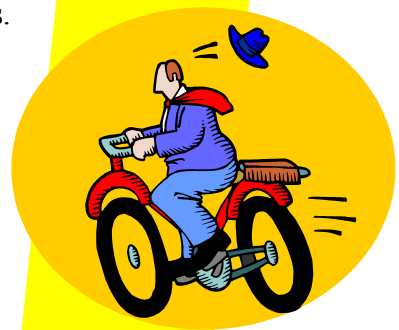
- A green light means you should first stop, look both ways for cars, then walk across the street.
- A red or yellow light means you should not cross.
- Some traffic lights have signs that light when you should “Walk” or “Don’t Walk.” Sometimes you need to push a button to make the signs change to “Walk.”



Bicycle (Bike) Safety

The following are general bicycle safety tips:

- **Always wear a helmet. It is the law for people 18 years old or younger!**
- Keep your bike in good condition.
- Put light reflectors on your bicycle.
- Ride at the right side of the street at all times.
- Obey traffic signs and lights.
- Use hand signals to make turns.
- Look for motor vehicles, people who are walking and other bicycles.
- Look for opening car doors.
- Keep away from broken glass, litter, or broken pavement.
- Keep both hands on the handlebars.
- A bicycle rider may carry a passenger **only** if that person is sitting on a separate, attached seat.
- Lock your bike or chain it to a bike rack when you leave it.



Crime Safety

The following are some general crime safety tips:

- Lock your door while you are at home and when you leave your home.
- Turn on a lamp at night in a room that can be seen from the outside of your apartment when no one is at home.
- Stay away from places that are known to be dangerous.
- If you go somewhere, tell someone where you are and when you will return.
- Ask a trusted neighbor to pick up the mail and newspaper when you are away from home for a few days.

Safety for Children

Talk to your children about the following:



- Education is important.
- Stay busy when alone. Give children many activities to fill their time. For example, teach them to read books, draw or paint, play a game, write a letter to a friend or relative, exercise, listen to music, and other activities.
- Use common courtesy and expressions such as *please*, *thank you*, *excuse me* and *I'm sorry*.
- Violent behavior is not the right way to resolve problems.
- Gangs, drugs, alcohol and guns are dangerous. Stay away from them.

Child Abuse

“Child abuse” is the term used when an adult acts or fails to act in a way that causes serious physical or emotional harm to a child, including sexual abuse. Child abuse is against the law.

Child Neglect

Child neglect is not giving proper care and attention to a child. Child neglect causes a child's health or welfare to be harmed or placed at risk of harm. It includes leaving a child alone without a responsible person around. Child neglect is against the law.



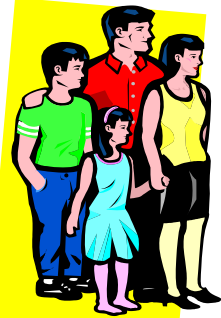
Earthquake Safety

Earthquakes sometimes occur in California. The following tips on how to act during an earthquake can be very helpful in preventing serious injury.



Three Things to Know Before an Earthquake

- How to turn off gas, water and electricity
- First Aid
- A plan for reuniting your family if you are in separate places



Four Basic Things to Do During an Earthquake

- **Stay Calm.**
- Stand in a doorway, or crouch under a desk or table, away from windows or glass.
- Stand away from buildings, trees, telephone and electric lines.
- Drive away from underpasses or overpasses. Stop in a safe area. Stay in your vehicle.



Six Basic Things to Do After an Earthquake



- Look for injuries. Give first aid, if needed. First aid instructions are written in the white pages of the telephone directory.
- Look for gas, water, and sewage breaks, electrical shorts and broken electric lines. Turn off utilities that might be damaged.
- Look for building damage and potential safety problems during aftershocks.
- Clean up dangerous spills.
- Wear shoes.
- Turn on the radio. Listen for instructions from public safety agencies.
- Do not use the telephone except in an emergency.

Survival Items to Keep on Hand

- Portable radio with extra batteries
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- First Aid Kit: Include the medicines that household members need.
- First Aid book
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches
- Adjustable wrench for turning off gas and water
- Portable fire escape ladder for homes/apartments with more than one floor
- Bottled water: Store enough for all household members.
- Canned and dried foods: Keep a week's worth of food for all household members. Rotate water and food into normal meals to keep freshness.
- Non-electric can opener
- Portable stove: Be sure there is no gas leak in the area before using.
- Charcoal should be burned only outdoors. Indoor charcoal burning can lead to poisoning and death!
- Telephone numbers of police, fire department and your doctor. Remember to use the phone for emergencies only.



Biological and Chemical Threats to Safety

Biological and chemical weapons pose a different problem for our community. If there is a problem, the local San Diego law, fire, public health and emergency medical personnel will protect us.

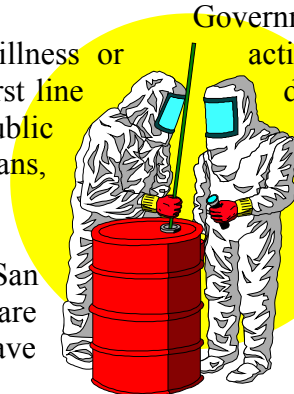
If the first sign of attack is human illness or injury, public health workers are the first line of defense. These workers include public health disease detectives, physicians, microbiologists and paramedics.

It is important for you to know that San Diego's public health services, health care and emergency medical systems have

years of experience and a close relationship. They can give the highest level of services in the event of a medical threat.

Government officials will tell you about the actions they are taking and things you should do in the case of an attack. They use the Emergency Alert System (EAS) over radio and television as well as in print media.

You also should make sure your family and home are prepared for an emergency.



What You Should Do

- Remain calm.
- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Have a family preparedness plan.
- Stay informed.
- If an evacuation is ordered, follow the instructions of local officials. Evacuation routes and the location of shelters will be given.
- If “shelter-in-place” is recommended, local officials will give instructions about things you should do.
- Do not leave your sheltered location or return to the evacuated area until local officials say it is safe to do so.

Car Seat Safety

There is a law for children’s safety while they are in the car with you or others. A child passenger safety seat must be used until a child is age six or weighs 60 pounds. Follow the law. There is a fine of up to \$270 per child that will affect your driving record.



Here are some tips about the law:

Infants up to one year of age and weighing 20 pounds:

- Infants must ride in the back seat facing the rear.
- Car seat carrying handle should be down.
- Recline seat at a 45-degree angle.
- Keep harness straps snug.

Toddlers from one to four years of age and weighing 20 to 40 pounds:

- Toddlers may sit facing forward.
- Put the seat in an upright position.
- Harness straps should be in upper slots at or above shoulder level.
- Fasten harness clip at armpit level.

Children up to 6 years of age or weighing 60 pounds:

- Children should use booster seats or front facing car seats.
- Place seatbelt low over the upper thigh.
- Seatbelt should be snug across the center of the shoulder, not across the neck or face.

Other things to consider:

- Be aware of the danger of airbags for children. Children under age 12 should not ride in the front seat of a car with airbags.
- Call the car seat safety phone number at the end of this section to get updated information for the car you are using to transport your children.

Smoking Safety

Smoking and other tobacco use is very harmful to your health and the health of those around you. Children who live with a smoker are at higher risk of getting asthma, allergies, colds, ear infections and other infections. Smoking can cause your baby to be born prematurely as well as have a low birth weight.

If there is smoking in the house, use an ashtray. Never throw matches or cigarettes on the floor. Be sure they are completely out before throwing them in a trashcan. Never smoke in bed. Never smoke near flammable substances such as gasoline, natural gas or cleaning fluids.

You can get counseling on the telephone to help you quit smoking. Call the California Smokers' Helpline at **1-800-NO BUTTS** or **1-800-662-8887**. The counselor can help you come up with a plan that works for you. It may help to make an appointment to speak with a counselor in person.



Domestic Abuse and Violence

Domestic or family abuse, and violence are crimes in this country. A person who abuses others can be fined or taken to jail. Children can be removed from the home.

Domestic or family violence is a misuse of power or control with an intimate partner, such as a husband or wife, or with a family member.

Domestic violence includes physical and sexual attacks and verbal threats. These include striking, hitting, kicking, punching or threatening a person. Over time, the threats and/or beatings generally happen more often, last longer, and cause great physical and emotional injuries.



Call the police—911 (all emergencies) or 619-531-2000

If you are being beaten or expect an attack.

- Leave the scene. Go to the home of a neighbor, friend, or relative.
- Get immediate medical help if you are hurt.
- Family shelters or domestic abuse agencies can offer you help and advice.

Emotional abuse and insulting words are almost always part physical abuse. These are not considered criminal acts but are not acceptable. People who abuse others often blame the victim or something else for their violent acts. They do not take responsibility for their abusive behavior.

Making your husband or wife feel worthless or bad about himself or herself is **not acceptable** in the U.S.

Remember, the following behaviors are not acceptable:

- **Insulting, vulgar or cruel words**
- **Treating your husband or wife in a “lesser way.” This includes making unfair demands, not allowing him or her to get a job, go to the store, drive, visit friends, go to a class, etc.**
- **Not allowing him or her to express ideas and opinions**

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is anything that causes another person to engage in a sexual act by threatening or making that other person feel afraid. Sexual abuse can include fondling, incest, rape, or sexual offenses in any degree.

Where to Find Help

All Emergencies—911

- Domestic Violence Hotline—(619) 234-3164
- California Office of Emergency Services, San Diego Office—(619) 525-4287, <http://www.oes.ca.gov>
- Car Seat Safety—(858) 576-1700, ext. 5704
- Catholic Charities—(619) 287-9454
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—<http://www.cdc.gov>
- County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency—(619) 338-2888
- Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)—1-800-777-0133
- Family Resource Center—(858) 565-5598
- Federal Emergency Management Agency—1-800-621-3362, <http://www.fema.gov/>
- Health related questions (County)—(619) 515-6620
- Office of Disaster Preparedness (County)—(858) 565-3490
- San Diego F.B.I.—(858) 565-1255, <http://sandiego.fbi.gov/>
- San Diego Fire Department—(619) 533-4300
- San Diego Police Department—(619) 531-2000
- United Way Infoline—(619) 230-0997
- Website: County of San Diego—<http://www.co.san-diego.ca.us/>
- Women’s Resource Center—(760) 757-3500

Transportation



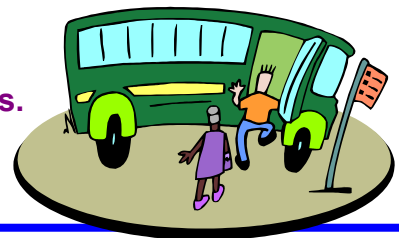
Americans use many different forms of transportation, such as the bus, trolley, car, bicycle, train, taxi or airplane.

When traveling anywhere, you should always carry:

- A proper ID
- An emergency telephone number in case you need help
- Your address and telephone number at home
- Some coins for using a public phone

Bus (Local)

San Diego has a bus system that can take you many places. There are 97 routes among the six bus operators in San Diego and the surrounding areas.



Urban and Local Buses

- Usually stay within a city or community
- Travel short distances
- Stop many times
- Have wheelchair lift service
- Cost \$1.75 for each trip

To pay...



- Get on the bus
- Put cash or tokens into the fare box
- If you are riding with a "Day Tripper" or "Monthly Pass," just show it to the driver when you get on the bus.

Express Buses

- Usually travel on freeways and major streets
- Have a limited number of stops
- Have “rush hour” service every 20 minutes or less
- Have a route number ending in zero



Commuter Express routes are provided by County Transit System (CTS) for long distance trips between North County communities and Centre City San Diego.

Areas served include Oceanside, Carlsbad, Encinitas, Solana Beach, Carmel Valley, Escondido, North County Fair and Poway. Buses between these cities run only during morning and evening rush hours. The routes are numbered 800, 810 and 820.

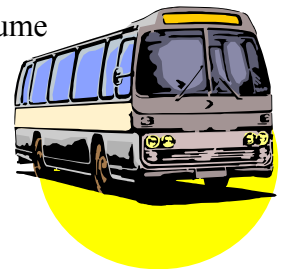
Transfers

If one bus will not take you to the place where you are going, you may be able to get there by transferring to another bus. When you get on the first bus, ask the driver for a transfer slip. Transfers are free when used from one local bus to another (except on North County Transit routes). When transferring from a local bus to an urban or express bus route there is a small extra cost.

Riding Guidelines

Here are some helpful ways to make your trip more pleasant:

- Smoking, food and drinks are not allowed.
- Radio or tape players must be listened to with headphones. The volume must be set so that other passengers cannot hear it.
- Animals are not allowed, except dogs trained to help disabled persons.
- Look for signs about special seating for seniors and disabled people.
- Hold on to handrails when standing.
- For everyone’s safety, do not talk to the driver while the bus is in motion.
- When you get near the bus stop where you want to get off, pull the cord or push the button over your seat. This lets the driver know to stop the bus for you. The exit door in the back usually has a light. When this light is green, you can get off the bus.
- For information about bus routes and time schedules, call the number at the end of this section.



Bus (Long Distance)

Buses are a good and low cost way to travel long distances. The bus station in San Diego (Greyhound) is located in downtown San Diego at 120 West Broadway. There are stops at other places in the city and county. For information, call the Greyhound Trailways phone number listed at the end of this section.

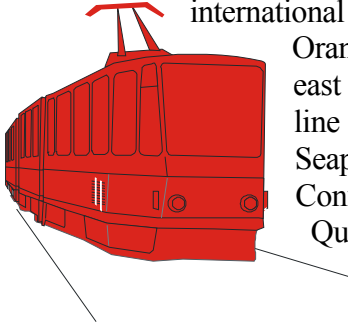


Remember the following:

- **Buy your tickets at the bus station.**
- **Arrive at the station early to buy a ticket.**
- **Buses always leave on time.**
- **There are toilets on the bus at the back.**
- **Follow all bus rules.**

Trolley

The San Diego Trolley is an electric train service that connects to the bus and long distance train systems. The trolley moves quicker and has fewer stops than local bus services. Trolleys have two routes. The Blue Line starts near Qualcomm Stadium and goes through Mission/Fashion Valley, Old Town, and Centre City San Diego to the international border at San Ysidro. The Orange Line goes from Centre City east to El Cajon or Santee. The East line also has Bayside extension at Seaport Village, the San Diego Convention Center, and Gaslamp Quarter.



The Transit Store has everything you need for riding the Metropolitan Transit System Bus and Trolley, including:

- Monthly passes for MTS buses, Trolleys, and the Coaster
- DayTripper Tickets
- Bus & Trolley Tokens
- MTS Senior, Disabled, and Youth Transit Identification Cards
- Brochures and other information



Trolley Tickets

You need a valid ticket or pass to ride the trolley. Do **not** get on the trolley without a valid ticket or pass. If you do, you may be cited by a code compliance officer. Then you will need to pay a fine.

If you need to buy a ticket, use the ticket vending machine at the trolley station. Press the button for the place you want to go. The machine will show the money you need to pay. Put your cash into the vending machine, and a ticket will come out of the machine.

You can buy a monthly pass at The Transit Store and other locations throughout San Diego, including Long's Drug Stores and Ralphs and Vons grocery stores.

For the location nearest you, call 1-800-COMMUTE (1-800-266-6883) or InfoExpress (619) 685-4900. The Transit Store is located at 102 Broadway (corner of First Avenue), in downtown San Diego. The phone number is (619) 234-1060.

Taxicab Service

Taxicabs are found in most large cities.



The following is general taxicab service information:



- A photo ID of the driver and a permit to drive must be posted inside the taxicab.
- The fare is usually posted on the outside of the passenger door.
- There is a set fare for the first 1/8-mile, then an added fare for the rest of the trip.
- A meter inside the taxicab shows your total fare.
- The driver will expect a tip that is 10-15% more than the total fare.
- It is the custom for the passenger to sit in the back seat.
- Taxicab contact numbers can be found in the local telephone book under “Taxicab.”

Bicycles

Bicycles or “bikes” are used for recreation and exercise. Some people ride their bikes to school or work.

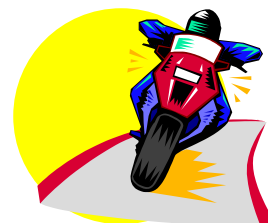


- Bicycles may be transported on some buses. Look at your bus schedule to see if they are allowed.
- You can get bike route maps of San Diego by calling the Bike Routes and Information phone number at the end of this section.
- Lock your bike or chain it to a bike rack when you leave it.

Please read the section on “bicycle safety.”

Motorcycle

The laws for motorcycles are much the same as for cars. Riders are required to wear a helmet and to have a special license.

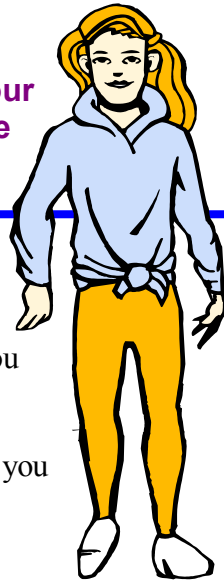


Walking

Walking is a good way to learn about your neighborhood and a good way to get the exercise you need to be healthy.

Here are some walking tips:

- Check the temperature before walking so you can dress for the weather.
- When you go for a walk, tell someone where you are going and when you think you will return.



Please read
the section on
“Safety When
You Walk.”

Train

The train is a comfortable and relaxing way to travel and see the United States.

The following are tips and information about trains:

- It costs more to ride on trains than on buses.
- They usually do not take you all the way to the place you want to go.
- Tickets are usually bought at the train station.
- Trains always leave on time, so be there early.
- Make sure you go to the correct gate number.
- There are toilets on the train.
- You can buy food on the train.
- It is not safe to lean out of the train window while it is in motion.
- The Amtrak train has service from San Diego to the North County region, Los Angeles, and other cities across the nation. A typical one-way ticket to Los Angeles costs about \$25.00 for adults and takes about two hours. Service is limited, so be sure to check the train schedules by calling Amtrak at 1-800-872-7245 or by going to www.amtrak.com.
- The “Coaster” provides local service from San Diego to the North county regions only.



Automobile (Car)

Follow these general tips if you plan to travel a long distance in a car:



- Before you leave, be sure the engine works well and that there is enough oil and gas.
- Always wear a seat belt.
- Know how to read road maps and highway signs.
- You can buy food and gas along the side of freeways.
- When sleepy or tired, go to rest stops and rest as long as needed.
- Throwing trash out of the window is illegal.
- Do not ever give rides to strangers.
- Keep your car doors locked at all times.
- Never drink and drive. Never drive while on medication that harms your judgment.
- Follow the child passenger safety seat law (See details in the “Safety” section).

Transportation and Immigration

During your first year in the U.S., you must have a **refugee travel document (I-570)** if you wish to leave the country. If you cross the border without this document, you will **not** be permitted to re-enter the U.S.

After living in the U.S. for one year, you can apply for **permanent legal resident status** or the “green card.” If you want to travel outside the country and have a green card, you have to apply for a **re-entry permit (131)**. The re-entry permit is valid for two years. You do not need this permit if you have a valid passport from another country.



Refugee travel document (I-570) information:

- A Catholic Charities Services immigration counselor can help you with the application.
- It may take up to 3-4 months before you receive the document.
- The travel document will be valid for two years.
- Fees must be paid to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and for the photos and other services.

When you become a U.S. citizen, you can apply for a U.S. passport at the post office at 2535 Midway Drive in San Diego (near the Sports Arena).

Airplane

Air travel is the quickest form of transportation. You can travel by plane to most cities. You can often get discount tickets if you buy them at least 2-3 weeks before you plan to travel. Travel agencies, the Internet and local newspapers have discount information.



Getting to the Airport

If you park your car at the airport during your trip, it costs at least \$9-10 per day. Instead, you can go to the airport in a bus, taxicab, a shuttle bus, or in the car of a friend or family member. Buses are often slow, so plan on extra travel time based on how



far you live from the airport. Also, remember that it is difficult to manage large bags on the bus. Shuttle buses are small vans that are priced according to the distance you live from the airport. Shuttles do not usually cost too much, especially if you buy a round-trip ticket.

Here are some general airport tips:

- You should arrive at the airport at least two hours before your flight is scheduled to leave.
- You must obey all security regulations. You will be asked to answer questions about your luggage.
- Airline employees will look for weapons or dangerous materials on you and in your luggage before you are allowed to enter the boarding areas.
- Carry your photo ID and ticket with you at all times.
- Never leave your luggage unattended.
- Remain in the boarding gate area until your seat or row number is called for boarding.

Where to Find Help

- Bike Routes and Information—1-800-266-6883
- Bus Routes and Time Schedules Information—(619) 233-3004
- County Transit System Call Center—1-800-921-9664
- Greyhound Bus—(619) 239-3266
- Highway conditions—1-800-427-7623
- Ride link for carpool & bicycling information—(619) 237-7665
- San Diego Regional Transportation information—1-800-266-6883
- San Diego Transit System for Disabled and/or seniors—1-877-232-7433
- Trolley, Bus and Coaster 24-hour Information—(619) 685-4900

Housing in the U.S.



Types of Housing

You may rent or buy several types of housing in the U.S.:

- **Apartments:** Apartment buildings are found throughout San Diego. There may be only a few or as many as 200 apartments in your building. Apartments usually share an entrance. Then each apartment is entered through its own door from the common entrance hall.
- **Semi-attached House or Condominium:** A semi-attached house or condominium is a building that shares one or more walls with buildings next to it. It has its own entrance. Often it will have more than one floor and both a front and back door.
- **Single-family House:** A single-family house is a building usually surrounded by a yard. It usually has more than one entrance from the outside. It may have one or two floors.
- **Trailer Homes:** Trailer homes are usually located in a park of many trailer homes. They are separate homes with one floor. They usually are made of manufactured materials. They have a kitchen, bathroom, living room and one or more bedrooms.

In and Around the Home

A typical house or apartment has a kitchen, living room, and one or more bedrooms and bathrooms.

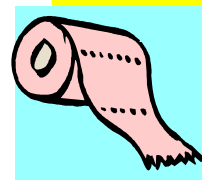
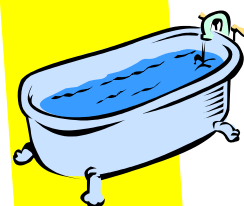
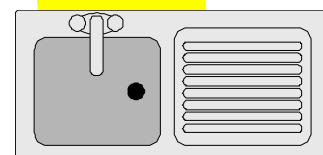
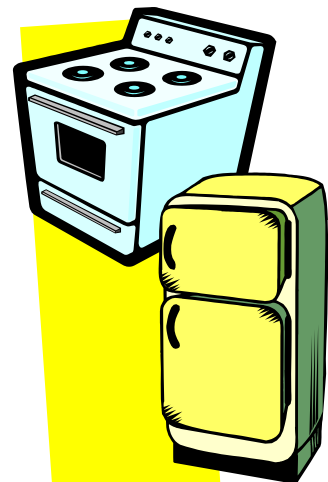
Kitchen

- The kitchen is a room used for cooking. It usually contains a **stove**, a **refrigerator**, a **sink**, and **storage areas**. It sometimes has a **dishwasher**. Some kitchens are large enough to have tables and chairs, so you can sit and eat. There may be a special eating area called a dining room.



Most **stoves** run on electricity or gas. You should know how to use a stove correctly and safely so accidents are not caused. Ask someone to show you how to use your stove.

- A **refrigerator** is used to keep foods cold and fresh. Its door must always stay closed. Otherwise, the food inside will spoil. Unopened canned food and dry food can be kept in kitchen cabinets.
- A **sink** has hot and cold water running water. Ask someone to show you how to use the faucets correctly. Water coming from the kitchen and bathroom sink is OK to drink. The kitchen sink is the place to wash dishes and cooking utensils. Dirty water should go down the drain. Grease and food scraps should be put in the trash, because they could cause your sink to become blocked.
- If your sink has a garbage disposal, you can put food scraps in it and turn it on. You do not have to put the food in the trash. The garbage disposal has sharp blades that break up food before letting it go down the drain. Be careful not to put metal objects, large seeds or bones in the disposal. **Never put your hand in the disposal when it is turned on.**
- A **dishwasher** is a machine that washes dishes, pots and utensils. If there is one in your home, ask how to use it.



Bathroom

Bathrooms usually have a toilet, sink and bathtub or shower. The bathroom is where you use the toilet, wash and clean yourself.

Bathtub and Sink

Ask someone to show you how to use the faucets in the sink, tub and shower. Showers usually have a door or curtain to keep water inside the tub or shower area. If you do not keep these closed, water will spill on the floor. This can cause damage to the building. You will have to pay for any damage.

Toilet

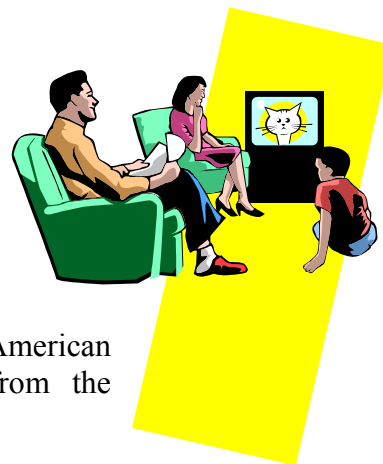
American toilets are used in a seated position. Usually the seat is kept down. However, men often lift up the seat and stand facing the toilet to urinate. There is no washing area or accessory in American toilets. Ask your apartment manager for permission to install one, if you want one.

Toilets can be flushed in different ways. Ask how your toilet can be flushed. Only human waste and toilet paper should be flushed down the toilet. You could block the toilet pipes by flushing any other items, such as tampons, diapers and hair. Many landlords will not pay for plumbers to fix your toilets and sinks when they get stuck. Take good care of them, so you do not have to pay for repairs.



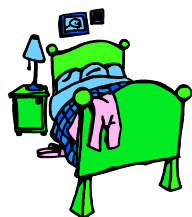
Living Room

The living room is a place for the family to gather and entertain guests. Sometimes it may be used as a place to sleep.



Bedrooms

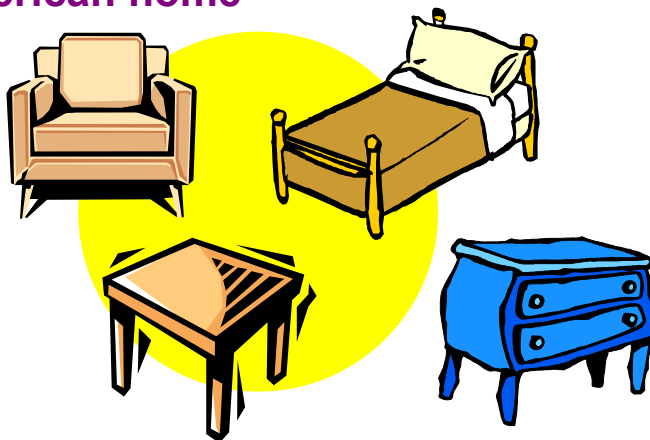
Your home may have one or more bedrooms. In American families, parents sleep in one bedroom, apart from the children. Children often share a bedroom.



Getting Furniture for Your Home

Basic furnishings found in an American home usually consist of the following:

- Table and chairs for eating and sitting
- Beds for sleeping
- Closets, cabinets and dressers for storage
- Sofa (couch) and chairs for sitting
- Rugs or carpets for covering the floor
- Curtains, drapes or Venetian blinds on the windows for insulation and privacy

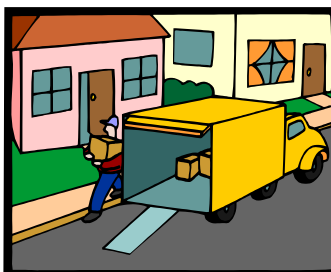


Once you are in your apartment, your anchor relative or case manager will collect furniture for your apartment. Furniture is provided depending on your needs, priorities, and the amount of furniture available.

You will receive used furniture unless your budget plan allows you to buy new furniture. You do not have to accept the furniture. You can buy new furniture after you have saved money. Return borrowed furniture to the case manager after you no longer need it. Then the furniture will be loaned to another family.

You may get furniture or basic items, such as cooking utensils and dishes from sponsors or

friends. If you buy furniture or basic items, remember that used items cost less money. You can find used items for sale at thrift stores, such as Salvation Army or Goodwill Industries.



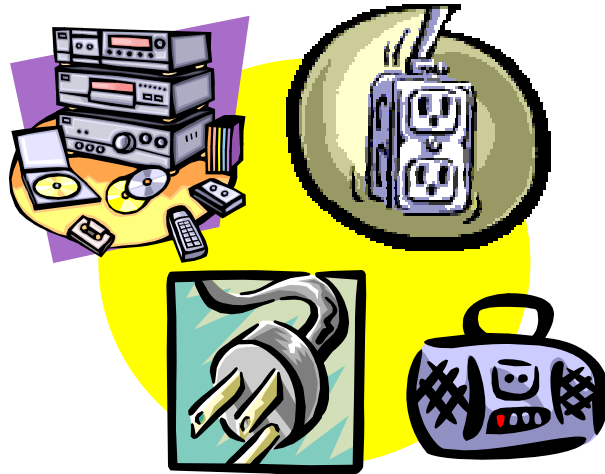
You can also buy used items when other people have “moving” or “garage” sales. Ask your sponsor or a friend about these. Often you can buy good quality items at low prices. Used rugs and carpets may also be bought. They help to keep the

noise level low and the house warm. Curtains, drapes or blinds help to create a private atmosphere.

Electricity and Electronics

The current in electric outlets in the United States is 110-115 volts, 60-cycle AC rather than 200-220 volts. Small appliances such as razors, hair dryers and curlers will work on the lower current. For other appliances, you need a transformer to change the current to higher voltage. All plugs in the United States are flat pronged rather than round.

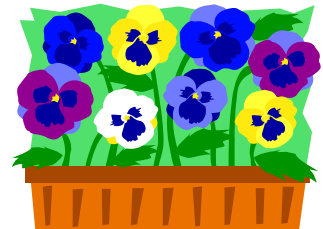
Videotape systems in the U.S. may not be the same as in your country. The U.S. uses VHS and DVD format with NTSC system. Very few American video players can play PAL/SECAM.



Outside the Home

If you live in a house, you may be allowed to make changes to it and the property area. Before doing anything, always ask the owner. He or she should know if there are local laws or housing association rules about changes. This includes activities in the yard, such as planting a garden, painting the house or making building additions.

If you live in an apartment, there may be storage areas in another part of the building. Your lease may allow you to use these areas. Ask the landlord or resident manager to explain what storage areas are available to you and how they can be used.



Cleaning Inside Your Home

Sponges and Brushes

A sponge or brush can be used with water and soap, detergent or other cleaners. Use these to clean things such as sinks, kitchen counters, bathtubs or showers.



Mops

A mop is used to wash the floors, usually with soap or detergent and water. Dip the mop in soapy water; then spread it on the floor. Do not throw buckets of water on the floor. Wood floors should not be cleaned with a large amount of water. The water can damage the floor. Instead, clean the floor by sweeping with a broom, or use a mop that is damp with very little water.



Brooms

Brooms are used for sweeping dust or dirt off of hard floors. Sweep the dirt and dust into a dustpan and put it into a trashcan. Do not sweep dirt onto a public area.



Detergents and Cleaners

You can buy many different detergent and cleaning products for washing floors and other parts of the house. Some of the chemicals in detergents and cleaners can damage furniture or cloth. Some can harm skin, hair or other parts of the body. They can be harmful if mixed together. Ask about these products or read the labels carefully.



Vacuum Cleaners

A vacuum cleaner is a machine that uses suction to clean up dirt and dust. It is useful for picking up small pieces from rugs, carpets, floors, drapes and furniture.



Washer and Dryers

For washing clothes, towels and linens, Americans use a washing machine. Washing machines are sometimes found in a house or apartment building. In a house, the washing machine is sometimes found in the basement or near the kitchen.

For drying laundry, a machine called a dryer may be used, or you may hang the laundry to dry it. Some houses have clotheslines in the yard for drying laundry.



Disposing of Garbage and Trash

Any garbage or trash around the house should be placed in a bag or container. Make sure the container is covered to stop spilling. Large amounts of trash should not be kept in the house. In most apartment buildings, there is a large container where trash can be placed. In a house and some small apartment buildings, trash is placed in a garbage container outside near the street.

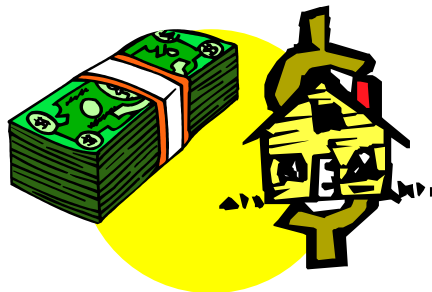
Later, the trash is picked up by a trash service. Recycle all cans, bottles and paper trash in a recycle bin, so these materials can be processed and reused.



Paying for Housing

Renting or Leasing Housing

Your case manager will find a low-cost apartment for you if you are a free case.

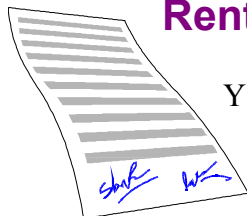


Otherwise, you can look to the following for help in finding a place to live:

- Friends
- Co-workers
- Resettlement agency
- “For Rent” signs on buildings
- Classified section in newspapers (like the *Pennysaver*)
- Real Estate agents (you may have to pay a fee for this service)

Here are a few tips:

- Find out if the apartment has a lease or a month-to-month rental agreement.
- When there is a lease, you must wait until it ends before you are able to move.
- You must give your landlord (also called “owner”) or apartment manager a written notice 30-days before moving from the apartment.



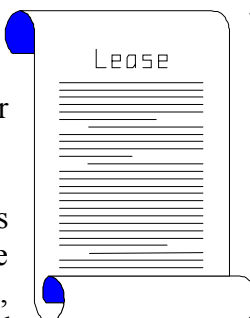
Rental Agreement or Lease

You will have to sign a rental agreement or a lease to rent an apartment. A rental agreement or lease is an agreement between you and the landlord. It means you are allowed to live in the house or apartment if you agree to pay a certain amount of money and follow the rules listed in the rental agreement or lease.

The rental agreement or lease also lists your rights and responsibilities. Before signing the rental agreement or lease, make sure you understand what it says and means.

When you rent an apartment or house, the owner or apartment manager will want to know about

apartments or houses you have rented in the past. If you have had problems with your landlord in the past, you might have trouble being accepted by other landlords. Examples are not paying rent, leaving without giving notice, or not cleaning your apartment when you moved.



A lease usually lasts for six months or one year. When you sign the lease, you are usually asked to pay the first month's rent, and sometimes the last month's rent. You have to obey the rules of the lease. If you move away before the lease ends, you must pay a fine.

A lease may limit the number of people who are allowed to live in the residence. If too many people live there, you may be forced to leave.

Security or Cleaning Deposit

You also must pay a security or cleaning deposit that may cost as much money as the first month's rent. The landlord holds the security or cleaning deposit in case it is needed to pay for repairs to damage caused when you lived there.

Because of this, it is important to look at the apartment carefully before you move in. Then write to the landlord about any damages that were not caused by you. You cannot be made to pay for past damages. However, you could be made to pay if the landlord does not know the damages were already there at the time you moved into the apartment.

To help get your cleaning deposit money returned in full, clean your apartment well. Make it look the same or better than it did when you moved into it. Even after that, you might still have to pay to clean the carpet and paint the walls.

When you plan to move out, give your landlord a 30-day written notice. Always keep a copy of your 30-day notice.



Making Housing Payments

Usually the rent must be paid on the first day of every month. The rent payment due date should be on the lease. If you do not pay or are often late to pay, you will be “breaking” the lease, or not following its rules.

The landlord could force you to leave because of this. When you sign your lease, be sure to find out to whom the rent should be paid.

Find out about other costs **not** included in the lease or rent agreement. Often utilities (heating, hot water, electricity and gas) and the telephone are not part of the rent. If these bills are not paid on time, the services could be turned off.

Cosigners

A cosigner is a person who signs the lease with you and agrees to make sure you have enough money to pay the rent. If you are unemployed or do not earn much money, the landlord may say you need a **cosigner** for the lease.

Where to Find Help

- Housing Discrimination—1-800-233-3212
- Low Income Housing/San Diego Housing Commission—(619) 231-8833
- San Diego Mediation Center for legal services—(619)-266-7223
- Tenant/Landlord Hotline—(858) 571-1166 (24-hour recorded information)
- Legal Center—(858) 571-7100

U.S. Laws



It is very important to learn the basic laws about living in your new homeland. There are federal, state and local laws. The laws were made to protect your rights. These rights include the right to freedom of speech, the press, religion and assembly (freedom to hold meetings). Try to learn about the laws and act as a good citizen.

If you are accused of breaking the law, you are considered innocent until proven guilty. You will need to attend court. You have the right to a lawyer who will represent you in court. If you do not have the money to pay for a lawyer, the court will find one at no cost to you. If it is judged that you have broken the law, you will be put in prison or made to pay a fine.

You do not have to go to court if you are given a traffic ticket. The fine can be paid by mail.

General Tips on U.S. Laws



- Federal laws apply to everyone living in the U.S.
- State laws apply to everyone within a certain state, and laws are different from state to state.
- Local laws apply to a city or county.
- When you sign a legal paper, it means you have agreed to the statements on the paper. Never sign a paper unless you fully understand what it means. Saying you did not read or understand something you signed is no excuse. You are still responsible for the statements on the signed paper.
- Being on other people's property without their permission is illegal. It is called trespassing.
- Filling out a public form with false information is illegal. Use your name the way it is written on your social security card, driver's license or identification card.
- You must have a permit to carry a gun and other firearms, certain kinds of knives, or other dangerous weapons.
- Prostitution is illegal. Both the prostitute and the customer can be sent to jail.

- Urinating outdoors in public is against the law. Use a public toilet or restroom.
- Hunting and fishing require permits.
- Littering (throwing or dropping trash and papers in public places) is illegal.
- Picking other people's fruits or flowers usually is illegal.
- If you are not sure if something is legal, ask your sponsor or a friend.
- In the U.S., the police are here to serve and protect you. Offering the police money in exchange for a favor, called a "bribe," is illegal. If the police stop you, it is unlawful to run away. You could be shot for not stopping.



Resident Laws

Refugee Status



You entered this country with **refugee** status. You were given an I-94 Form. Keep this form with you at all times. Every January, non-citizens must report their addresses to the U.S. Attorney General. Also, non-citizens must file a Change of Address Form with their Homeland Security Office within 10 days of moving. You can get free forms at the post office or Homeland Security Office.

Permanent Resident Alien

After living in the U.S. for one year, it is possible to apply for Permanent Resident Alien status. You must do this before applying for citizenship. Any time spent outside of the U.S. as a refugee will be subtracted from the one-year period. After living in the U.S. for five years, you may apply for citizenship.

Change of Address Forms

Change of Address Forms should include the following information:

- **Name as it appears on your I-94**
- **Alien number (A number)**
- **Old and new addresses**
- **The date of the address change**
- **Clearly write: "Attention: Change of Address" on the envelope**

Becoming a U.S. Citizen

To become a citizen, you must be of good moral character, know enough English, and know about U.S. history and government. Your legal status affects your right to help family members to join you in the U.S. Men 18-25 years old must register for selective service or the "draft."



U.S. Immigration Law Changes

The following are some immigration law changes:

- The U.S. Department of Homeland security was established in 2003.
- The Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services is the new name for the Immigration and Naturalization (INS) Service.
- The immigration court passed a new law in March 1999, about people who have committed crimes. It does not matter when the crime happened.
- **If you have a criminal record:**
 - Talk to an immigration expert before you:
 - Pursue the immigration process
 - Travel outside the country
 - Turn in a naturalization application
 - Talk to a lawyer before going to an appointment with the INS to:
 - Apply for naturalization
 - Apply for a permanent legal residency
 - The court's decision might affect your ability to:
 - Get a green card
 - Stay in the country
 - Become a citizen



It is important to obey all laws. If you break the law, your green card might be taken away or you might have to leave the U.S.

Selective Service Law

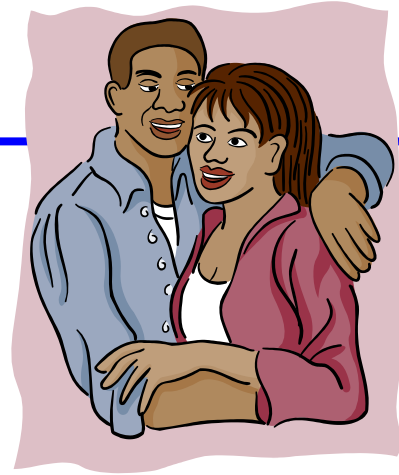


Selective Service provides manpower to the military by selecting or “drafting” young men gathered through the Selective Service registration. If you are an 18-25 year old male living in the U.S., you must register with Selective Service.

This includes all males who are permanent resident aliens, refugees and asylees. A person must register within 30 days of turning 18 years old. It is a felony and punishable by law if you do not register. Registering will give you some benefits. These include legalization, naturalization, financial aid and federal employment.

Marriage and Divorce

Marriage and divorce are legal matters in the U.S.



Marriage Requirements

- Register with the local government and get a license.
- Have a blood test (sometimes required).
- Show proof of your residency status (such as Permanent Resident Alien) documentation.
- Show proof of your age. In many states, persons under the age of 18 cannot get married without their parents' consent.
- A person can only have one spouse at a time.

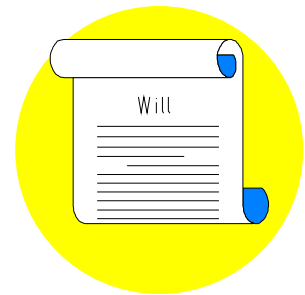
Same sex couples can register as domestic partners in California.

Divorce

Divorce can be complicated in this country. Consult a friend or your sponsor for help about legal services.

Wills or Estate Planning

A will or an estate-planning document is a legal paper with a list of money and property that you want others, such as your children or relatives, to have after you die. Talk to a lawyer or other experts about making a will. Also, you can take free classes that teach you about these issues.



Where to Find Help

- Center for Community Solutions Legal Clinic—(858) 272-1574
- Downtown San Diego Legal Clinic—(619) 533-5501
- Infoline of San Diego County (United Way)—1-800-227-0997
- Legal Aid Society of San Diego, Inc.—(619) 262-0896

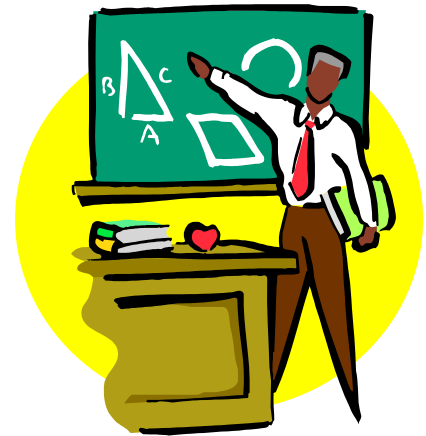
Education



Getting Your Child Enrolled in School

Getting your child enrolled in school is important. Every child in the U.S. is required by law to attend school from age five until at least age 16. Your children will be enrolled in a public school near your home. Children are usually placed at a grade level according to their age. They are not placed according to the number of years they have attended school in the past or their English language skill level. Some schools give placement or entrance exams to new students to decide where to place them.

The California English Language Development test (CELDT) is given each year to see how much English your child can speak and understand. Schools offer several programs for English learners. Each school district offers many choices for your children's education. Your child's school will have information regarding these choices.



The United States Education System

Name	Age of Student	Grade(s)
Nursery	0-3	none
Pre-School	2-5	none
Kindergarten	5	K
Elementary School	6-10 (11)	1-5 (sometimes)
Middle School	11-13	6-8
Secondary/High School	14-18	9-12
Trade Schools	open	none
Community College	18+	none
University	18+	none

Registering Your Children for School

To register your children for school, you will be asked to answer questions on many forms. Write your children's names as they are written on their birth certificates or I-94 cards.

When you register your children for school, you must bring the following items for each child:

- **I-94 card**
- **Birth certificate, passport or other identifying document**
- **Two proofs of address (such as a utility bill or rental agreement)**
- **Immunization records**

Before your children are enrolled in school, they must have certain immunizations (shots to prevent illnesses). Students will not be allowed to go to school without them. More immunizations will be needed as your child gets older (See the "Immunizations" section for more information).

- **Other school records**



Special Considerations

Nursery/Pre-School

Many parents place their 2-5 year old children in nursery or preschool to help them learn and prepare for kindergarten. There are many different nursery and preschools with different costs. There may be a preschool at or near your work place.

The Head Start Program is a preschool program funded by the government. It helps your child improve his or her English and develop social skills. There is a waiting list for the Head Start Program. Plan ahead by putting your child's name on the waiting list at the nearest Head Start Program before your child's third birthday.

For more information, see the "Child Care" section of this guidebook.



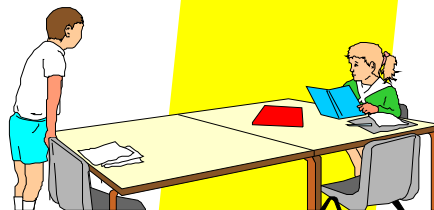
Special Education

U.S. law states that physically handicapped, deaf, blind or mentally challenged children also must attend school. Many schools have special classes or programs for these children.



After-School Programs

After the regular hours of school, many schools have programs to help with homework or give children activities to do. Many schools also have special classes or meetings to help students learn English faster. Some after-school programs are free, but you have to pay money for some. You can ask your child's classroom teacher or school counselor if children can attend without paying extra money.



U.S. Education Facts

Months of Attendance

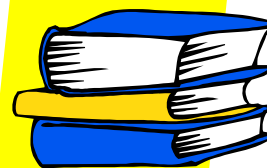
Most U.S. schools begin in September and continue until June. Some "year round" schools teach classes during the whole year, with several breaks. School vacations vary in different school districts, but many have the months June through August for "summer vacation." Some schools have classes during these vacation times, so students can make up work they missed or were behind on during the regular school year.



Students are given days off from school for teacher training days and holidays. The holidays include:

- Thanksgiving
- Christmas
- New Year's Day
- Easter
- President's Day

**Look at the calendar
at your child's school
to learn the schedule.**



Hours of Attendance

Classes are held from Monday through Friday. Most schools begin at 7:30 or 8:00 a.m. and end at 2:30 or 3:00 p.m. Call your child's school to find out the exact times. There are often special days when the students leave school early. Examples are weekly minimum days or special teachers' meetings.



Transportation to School (Elementary Through High School Only)

Some schools have buses that take the children to school. The school will tell you **where** there is a school bus stop near your home and the **time** that your child can be picked up.

It is important to go to the bus stop with your child on the first few days. If you live close to the school, your children may walk to school. It is also important to walk with your children the first days until they feel comfortable in their new neighborhood.

Meals at School

Many schools have a free meal program for the students if they are from low-income families. This program gives students breakfast and/or lunch at school. Students who do not get free meals can buy meals for \$1-\$2 at school or bring their own meals from home. Eating in the classroom is not allowed. The school has a time for lunch and a place to eat.

A monthly menu is usually sent home with each student. It lists the food being served each day. If there are cultural or religious reasons for your child to eat certain foods, talk to your school about it.

Books and Supplies

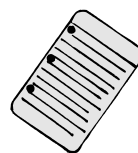
Most public schools lend students the books they need during the year. The books must be well cared for and returned at the end of the year. If a child damages, loses or does not return a book, the parents usually must pay for another book.

Parents need to buy supplies for their children to use at school. Ask a person at the school or a friend which items are needed for children depending on their ages. These items may include the following:

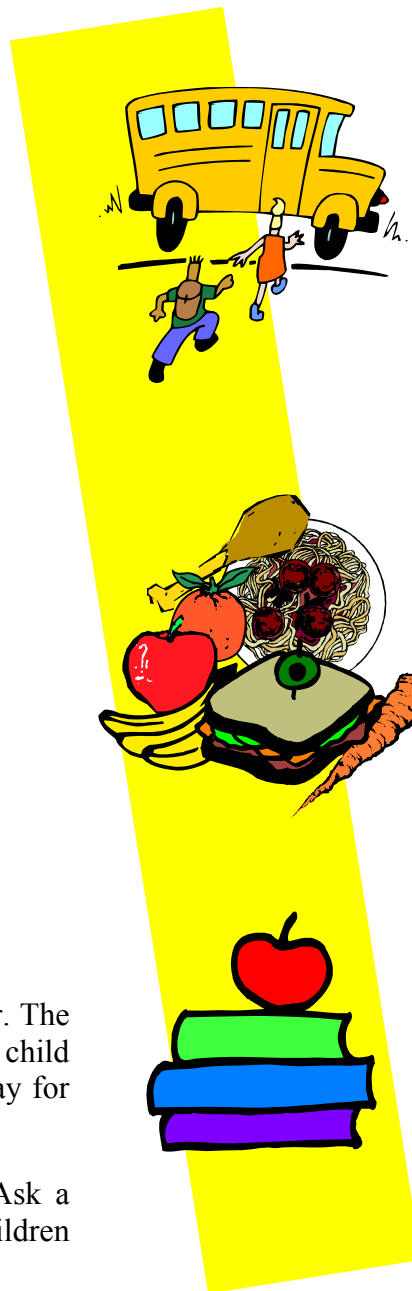
- Backpack
- Lined paper
- Paper folders to divide each subject
- Notebook (hard cover, three-ring)
- Pencils (Number 2)
- Eraser

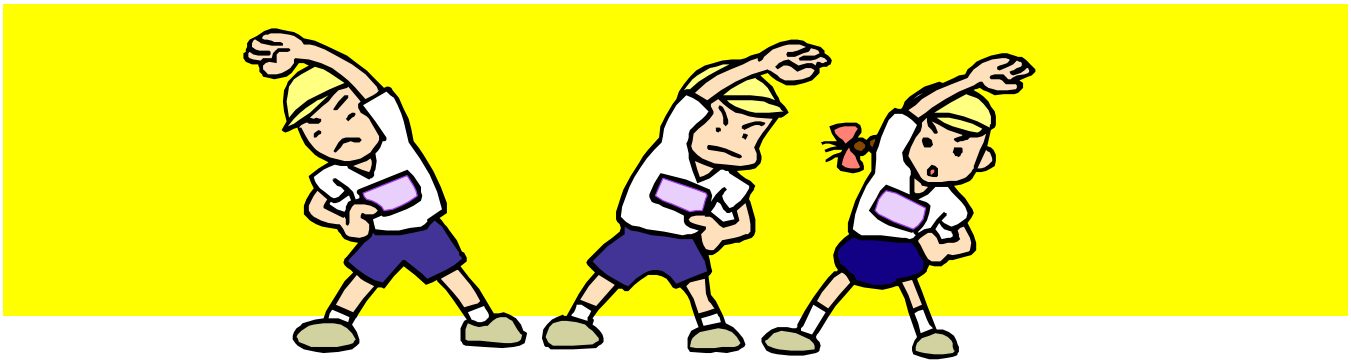


- Pen (black, blue or red ink only)
- Felt tip marker pen (yellow)
- Stapler (and staples)
- Crayons, markers or pencils
- Ruler



- Calculator
- Combination lock (for lockers)
- Wallet for school identification, meal card and bus pass





Physical Education

Physical education classes are often required for at least one hour per day.

The benefits of physical education classes include the following:

- Improving physical health and self confidence
- Learning how to work as a team
- Getting to know classmates
- Learning rules of fair behavior
- Using excess energy so that it is easier to sit quietly in the classroom



Other information about physical education classes:

- There may be dress code requirements in your child's school. If the dress code is against your culture or religion, talk to the school counselor.
- Most middle and high school students are required to change their clothes for physical education.
- There are separate rooms for girls and boys to change their clothes and to shower after physical activities. Showering is required.
- If you do not want your child to take physical education, discuss it with the counselor.



School Conduct

Here are some important tips on school conduct:

- Your child should attend all classes in which he/she is enrolled.
- You must let the school know if your child is not at school. You must also tell the reason your child is not at school. If you do not, the school will call you for information.
- Your child should arrive at school on time and be ready to learn every day. Find out from your school what you should do if your child arrives to school late.
- Class work and homework should be completed on time and returned to the teacher.
- Schoolwork is done alone or with other students. A test is usually taken without help from others. Sharing answers is not allowed. Original work is expected. It is dishonest to copy information from a book without giving credit to the author.



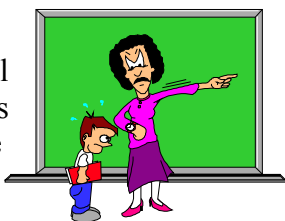
- Students should treat other students with respect.
- Students should keep their hands to themselves.
- Students should never touch another's belongings without permission.
- Follow all of the school rules.

Discipline at School

Your child will be disciplined if he/she does not obey the rules at school. Physical discipline is not allowed in public schools. Schools usually try to have the discipline fit the school rule that was broken.

Discipline can include the following: When more serious rules are broken, it can result in the following:

- Extra schoolwork
- Remaining in the school classroom during recess or at school after the usual time when students leave
- Not being allowed to take part in fun school activities



- A temporary suspension: Students must stay away from school for a period of time.
- Expulsion: Students cannot return to that particular school and will be placed elsewhere.
- Juvenile detentions: That means your child would be sent to a jail for youth.

Safety in School

All schools have a “Zero Tolerance Policy” about physical violence, the use of weapon, drugs and alcohol. These are not allowed at schools. Taking part in these behaviors could result in suspension, expulsion or juvenile detention (See above for description of these terms).



Counselors and Nurses

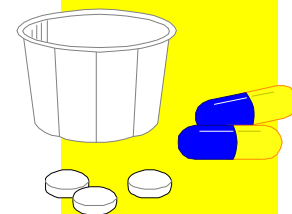
Elementary, middle and high schools usually have counselors and nurses. Counselors can help your child select classes and solve problems that occur at school. If your child has not followed the rules at school and is disciplined, counselors can help. You may be asked to meet with a counselor or teacher to talk about your child’s behavior or schoolwork. Taking part in your child’s education is important.

A school nurse can give emergency medical help and often does routine tests. These include hearing and vision tests.



Medicine at School

If your child needs to take medicine during school hours, ask how it is done at your school. Usually, the medicine must be given to the school nurse. Then she gives it to the student during school hours.

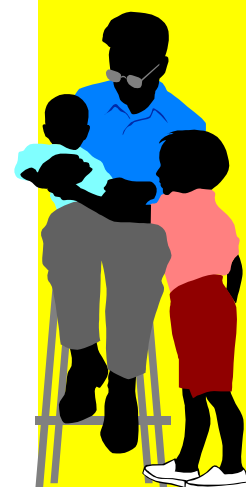


Role of Parents

It is important that you play an active role in the formal education of your child. You will sometimes be invited to see your child in school and talk with the teacher about his or her progress. Some schools have regular parent/teacher conferences several times a year. You might want to take an interpreter with you. These talks are good times for you to meet your child’s teachers and learn about the school.

Most schools also have a Parent Teacher Association (PTA). At regular meetings, parents and teachers talk about school programs and rules, ways of making the education better, and many other topics.

Schools usually send report cards to the home. Report cards tell you how your child is doing in school. You may be asked to sign the report card. You will sometimes be asked to sign forms to allow your child to go on special trips for education or fun. They are called “field trips.” Without the signed form, your child will not be allowed to attend the trip or event.



Working and Attending School

Many students in high school or college work before or after class or on weekends. During summer months, many students work to earn money for school, college tuition or to buy other things.

Adults who attend college often take night classes. Even when adult students work, they might still need to ask the government for money called a “grant” or “student loan.” Every college and university has a Financial Aid office.

General Equivalency Diplomas (GED)

Adults who have not finished high school can attend special classes, even while they are working. They can take a test to get their GED. This is usually accepted as being equal to a high school diploma. A person does not have to have a diploma or GED to attend Adult Education classes or Community Colleges.

Adult Education

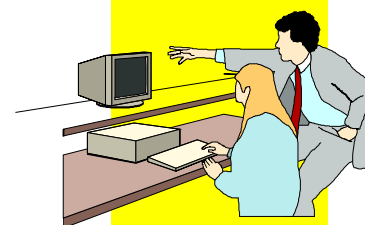
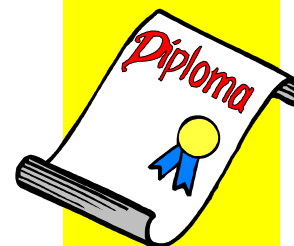
There are several adult education centers in San Diego. During your first year in the U.S., it is a good idea to attend adult education classes instead of colleges. The reason is that adult education classes are free or cost a small amount of money. Colleges will charge you out-of-state tuition fees until you have lived in the state for one year.

Community College

San Diego has community colleges located throughout the county. Adult Education Centers often are run by the community college system. You can ask your adult education teacher or look in the phone book for the community college nearest you.

The benefits of attending a community college include the following:

- The tuition cost is lower than at a university. It is about \$18.00 per unit.
- Classes are smaller than at a university.
- Usually, there are no entrance exams.
- Students are asked to take placement tests only in English and math.
- Books and parking permits are sold at the college bookstore.



University

The following is important information if you are interested in attending a university:

- U.S. universities require formal applications, which are often competitive.
- Call or visit an Admissions Office to get an application.
- Students usually enter a university in the fall semester or quarter.
- Students are required to take entrance exams.
- Foreign students are asked to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).
- Tuition at a university is much higher than at a community college.
- State-sponsored universities have financial help available.
- Each university has its own requirements, timelines and assistance.



Where to Find Help

- Adult Education—(619) 401-4125, www.guhsd.net/adult
- Braille Institute info & referral—(858) 452-1111, www.brailleinstitute.org
- High school equivalent certificate (GED) info—1-800-331-6316
- Parents Rights Calif. Dept. of Education—(916) 319-0791, www.cde.ca.gov/iasa/parntrts.html
- San Diego City Schools (SDCS)—(619) 725-8000, www.sandi.net
- San Diego Council on Literacy—(619) 574-1641, 1-888-850-7323 www.literacysandiego.org
- San Diego County Office of Education—(858) 292-3500, www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us
- SDCS Child Development Program—(858) 496-8126
- Special Education—(858) 292-3774, www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/speced

Employment

Getting a job can be a key part of becoming accustomed to your new life here. Getting a job can help you in many ways.



It can help you:

- Support yourself and your family
- Pay your food and housing bills
- Get a better-paying job
- Learn about American work customs and culture
- Improve your English skills by talking with your American co-workers

Entry Level Jobs

There are many “**entry level**” jobs for people who need to work. An entry level job is work that usually can be done without special skills. For these jobs, knowing some English is often enough. Entry-level jobs, like gardening and baby sitting, generally start at \$6.75 an hour.

Good “**references**” are important for getting better jobs in the future. “References” are

statements about your work experience and skills. They need to be written by people who know about your work habits, such as employers or other people who know about your work skills. On your job application, write the names of people who can say good things about your work habits and skills.



Your case manager and the employment services staff will help you:

- Find a job
- Do well at job interviews
- Fill out job applications
- Help with transportation and other services

Job Requirements in the State of California

To get a job, California law states that you must show proof of **legal status** and **authorization to work**.

- **Legal status** means that a person can legally live in the U.S.
- **Authorization to work** means permission has been granted by Homeland Security to legal temporary residents, allowing them to work while they are in the U.S.

To find a job in the state of California, you need the following:

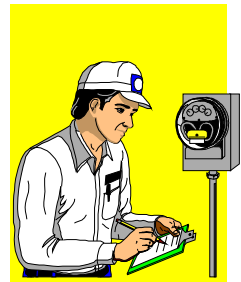
- Valid identification card
 - Proof of immigration status: Record of arrival and departure stamped Refugee or Parolee (I-94)
 - Employment Authorization Card (I-668A, I-668B, I-776)
 - Temporary Resident Identification Card (I-668)
- Resume (a list of your education and work experience)
- References (see above)

The case manager from your resettlement agency is available to help you find a job. One of the agencies you can get help from is the Employment Development Department (EDD).

Employment Development Department (EDD)

The EDD provides variety of services to employers, employees and job seekers. EDD:

- Connects persons looking for a job and employers with Cal JOBS. Cal JOBS is a free job listing and resume service. Thousands of jobs are listed each day. It has the biggest group of persons looking for work in the state.
- Protects workers against wage loss with Unemployment Insurance and Disability Insurance programs
- Helps find jobs for those persons who have problems finding work, including older workers, veterans, persons with disabilities, migrant and seasonal farm workers, and youth



- Works with the community, providing job training, placement and educational services
- Works with businesses and public agencies to find work for welfare workers and students



Employment Training Opportunities

There are many low or no cost job training programs. These programs help people learn basic or entry-level job skills. There are also programs for people with disabilities, people ages 55 and older, and youth. These job-training programs offer counseling and help people find a job. They also help people keep a job.

Where to Find Help

- California Employment Development Dept.—1-800-758-0398, www.caljobs.ca.gov
- San Diego Workforce Partnership—1-888-884-SDWP (7397), (TTY*) (619) 238-7246, www.workforce.org
- Social Security—1-800-772-1213, (TTY*) 1-800-325-0778, www.ssa.gov

Center for Employment Training

3295 Market Street, San Diego, CA 92102—(619) 233-6829, www.cet2000.org

Deaf Community Services of San Diego

3930 Fourth Ave., Suite 300, San Diego, CA 92103—(619) 398-2441, (TTY*) (619) 398-2440, www.dcsosd.org

Joblines

- City of San Diego Jobs—(619) 682-1011, www.sannet.gov/empopp
- Federal Jobs—(478) 757-3000, www.usajobs.opm.gov
- Registration for Selective Services—1-888-655-1825, (TTY*) (847) 688-2567, www.sss.gov/regist.htm
- San Diego County Jobs—(619) 531-5764, www.co.san-diego.ca.us
- State of California Jobs—(619) 237-6163, www.spb.ca.gov/jobsgen

Training

- Regional Occupational Program (ROP)—(858) 292-3529, www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us

Training-Disabled

- California Dept. of Rehabilitation—(619) 525-4184, (TTY*) (619) 525-4903, www.rehab.cahwnet.gov

Training-Youth

- San Diego Job Corps Center—1-800-246-2285, www.sandiegojobcorps.org
- Urban Corps of San Diego—(619) 235-6884, www.urbancorpssd.org

* For the hearing impaired

Child Care



Your child can get childcare services at home, at a childcare center, or from a family member or trusted friend. You can find childcare by yourself or with the help of your case manager.



Good childcare is important:

- Good childcare helps develop your child's body, emotions and mind.
- Infants and toddlers do better when they have the same person caring for them over time. The close relationship that is formed helps them feel secure.

Choosing a Childcare Center

Choose a childcare center with a childcare license. The license means the people working with your children have a good record of experience. Look for:

- A warm, welcoming place
- Caregivers who have been taking care of children for a long time
- Caregivers that act like they like children and know about them
- Caregivers that take time to talk to you
- Childcare centers that care for small groups of children
- Learn about daily routines, like diapering and feeding.
- You can help your child feel good about being at a childcare center.
 - Talk often with your caregiver.
 - Make sure your values, language and culture are honored and supported.
 - Visit the childcare center to see if your child:
 - Is happy at the center
 - Is safe
 - Has the correct equipment and materials for his or her age
 - Has interesting activities to do

You can change to a different childcare center if you do not like the center you choose. Just tell the center and your case manager two weeks ahead of time.

How to Pay for Childcare

You can get money or help from the government.

To get this help, you and your husband or wife must be:

- Working or in school
- Show the child welfare department proof that you attend school or work
- Have a low-income



Where to Find Help

Free Statewide Phone Numbers

- California SIDS Program—1-800-369-7437
- Child Abuse Hotline—(Voice) 1-800-422-4453, (TTY*) 1-800-222-4453, www.childhelpusa.org
- Child Care Connection—(Voice/TTY*) 1-800-543-7793, www.cccndsa.on.ca
- National Parent Information Network— (Voice/TTY*) 1-800-583-4135, www.npin.org
- Trustline—1-800-822-8490, www.trustline.org
- YMCA Childcare Resource Service—1-800-481-2151

** For the hearing impaired*

Communication



In the U.S., you have many choices about ways to communicate with others. These choices include by mail, the phone, pager, fax and computer.

Mail

Sending a Letter

When you send a letter, write the name and address clearly and completely.

Center of the envelope:

- First and last names of the person
- Street address of the person, with apartment number or Post Office Box number (P.O. BOX)
- City and State
- Zip Code

Upper left-hand corner of the envelope:

- Your name and address
- If the person or business cannot be found, the letter will be returned to you.

Upper right-hand corner:

A stamp



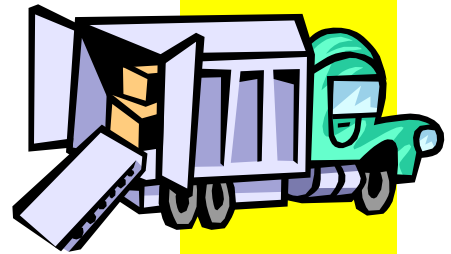
Mail Facts

The ways to send a letter are:

- Put the mail in U.S. mailboxes. They are blue with the postal sign on the side. They are often located on street corners and at post offices.
- Take mail to a private postal service business. They may charge extra to buy postage stamps and transport your mail.
- The U.S. mail is safe.
- Bills can be paid by mail, but never send cash through the mail. Use money orders, cashier's checks or personal checks.

Getting Mail After You Move

- The post office has free **change of address** forms.
- Let the following people and agencies know **each time** you move:
 - Department of Social Services
 - Your employer
 - The resettlement agency
 - Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
 - Your doctor or health care provider
 - Your children's schools
 - Your bank
 - Any person or and agency that sends you bills
 - Newspaper or magazine subscriptions
 - Office of Homeland Security (INS)



Telephone (Phone)

Telephone companies in the U.S. are private companies. The government does not run them.

Local Telephone Service

SBC is the main telephone company in San Diego.

- SBC offers the “Universal Lifeline Telephone Service” for low-income people.
- Most refugees qualify for this discount telephone service.

Long Distance Telephone Service:

There are many different long distance phone companies.

- Ask your friends, relatives or caseworker to help you choose a company.
- Long distance companies charge different prices.
- Generally, the cost of calling is lowest if you call late at night.
- Calling overseas is always expensive.



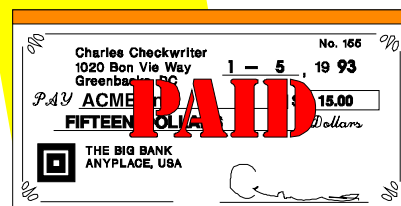
How to Get Telephone Service

- Your caseworker can help you set up telephone service.
- After the service is set up, you need to buy a phone.
- After you start your service, you will be sent a confirmation letter. Sign the letter and return it immediately. Otherwise, you will be charged the full price.



Paying For Your Telephone Service

- You will pay a one-time service connection fee (\$10 to \$33 for low-income people).
- Then you will pay a monthly service fee (close to \$6).
- You will also be charged for long distance calls made each month.



Calling Card

- A calling card is a plastic card with your name and phone number on it.
- You can use this card to make calls from public phones.
- The cost of the call will be on your monthly phone bill. There will be an extra cost for using the card.
- Keep this card safe and its number secret. If you lose your card or someone else uses it, tell the phone company. If someone else does use it, you still have to pay the bill.



Toll-Free Numbers

Some long distance numbers can be called for free by using a special number. There is no cost for making a call when you see the following numbers at the beginning of the phone number:

1-800, 1-888, 1-866, 1-877



Telephone Books

Telephone books are sent to each address that has phone service. Normally, there are two books.

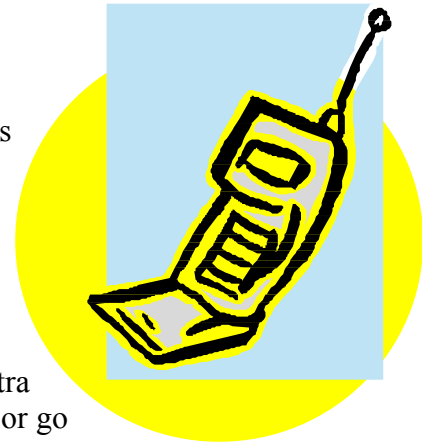
- White pages: The white pages list phone numbers for your city, including people, government offices, libraries, community agencies, and they have emergency information.
- Yellow pages: The yellow pages list businesses only.



Cell Phones and Pagers

Cell Phones

- You can usually buy one for a low price.
- There are many cell phone companies. Some give the phones for free if you buy their service.
- The cost of using a cell phone:
 - Cell phone use is billed by the minute for both incoming and out-going calls.
 - The average cost is about \$30 per month plus extra charges when you are out of the general service area or go over the number of minutes allowed.
 - Service contracts are usually for one to three years and require a credit card.



Pagers

- A pager is a small device that lets you know when you have a call.
 - You must next go to a telephone.
 - Dial the access number and a code number known only to you, and read your messages.
- Some pagers also display a short text message.
- It is easier and cheaper to buy a pager.
 - Service contracts can be monthly or by the year.
 - The fee for a pager is about \$8 per month or less.
 - A credit card may be needed to get the service.



Facsimile Transmission or “FAX”

A fax machine uses a phone line to send information. You can send a fax at a drug store or a shop that specializes in printing and photocopying. There is a cost for each sheet that is sent.



Internet Computer Services

- **Free internet and e-mail:** Go to any public library.
- **Internet cafes:** These can be located by looking in the yellow pages phone book. There is a cost to use the internet.
- **Internet companies:** There are many companies that charge a fee for internet service. Most companies require you to have a credit card and sign a one-to three-year contract.

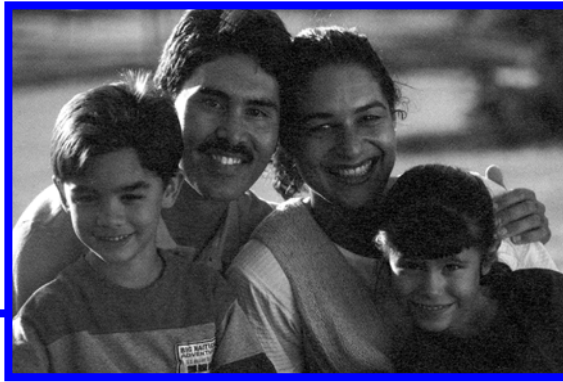


Where to Find Help

- SBC—1-800-310-2355, (TTY*) 1-800-397-3172, www.sbc.com

** For the hearing impaired*

Basic Health



It is important to be healthy, so you can carry out your resettlement activities. Your case manager will refer you to the Refugee Health Program. The Refugee Health Program will assess the health of you and your family. Even though you had health examinations before you arrived in the U.S., you still need a complete health exam. If you have any health-related problems, it is important to get help right away.

Health Examinations (Exams)

You will need to answer many questions about your health. Some of the questions may seem very personal. Being open to share information with the healthcare provider will allow them to help you. None of your answers will be shared with anyone without your permission. The exception is for communicable diseases. The law states that communicable diseases must be reported to local health authorities to help the community remain healthy.



Your sponsoring agency or family member will make an appointment for health exams for you and your family. The health exam will help you:

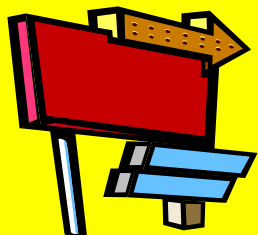
- Get a job
- Enroll in job training classes
- Attend English as a Second Language (ESL) classes

Clinic Health Exams

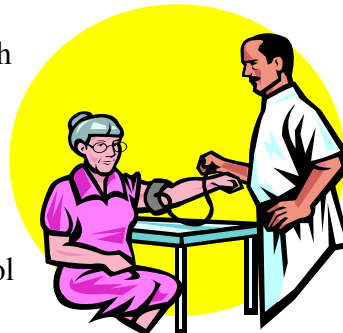
What to Expect

This complete examination will be done at no cost to you.

The examination includes the following:



- Physical exam: checking your blood pressure, vision, heartbeat, and other body functions
- Questions about past health problems
- Review of past immunizations
- Laboratory tests: blood, urine and stool for laboratory tests stool for hepatitis and parasites
- A test for lead in your child's blood
- Skin test for tuberculosis, and possibly a chest X-ray
- Health education on topics such as the risks of smoking and drinking alcohol



If you are expecting a baby, it is important to get care while you are pregnant. Tell the healthcare provider if you have any concerns about this.

If a problem is found during your health exam, you may have to go to another medical office for more medical care. These offices might include neighborhood community clinics, hospitals and public health centers.

What You Should Bring to the Health Exam Appointment

On the day of your appointment, you should bring the following:

- The International Organization for Migration (IOM) bag you received when you traveled to the U.S. This bag contains a record of your overseas health examination.
- Any medicines you are taking
- Your passport or I-94 card
- Other information concerning your health



How Healthcare Staff Can Help You

The healthcare staff can answer many of your questions about the examination and laboratory tests. They can help you and your family get the best health care possible. If you need help with English, the resettlement agency will tell the healthcare agency that an interpreter is needed.

There Are Many Types of Healthcare Services

Most communities in San Diego offer medical services at the following locations:

Public Health Centers

Most public health centers give limited health exams. These services are either free or low cost. They include testing and treatment for communicable diseases, such as tuberculosis, and immunizations against diseases. To enroll children in school, you must show their immunization records.



Community Clinics and Neighborhood Health Centers

Community clinics and neighborhood health centers usually accept Medi-Cal (government medical insurance plan). If you do not have health insurance, you often can pay a fee that is based on your income. This means that you pay less if you have a low-paying job or do not have a job.

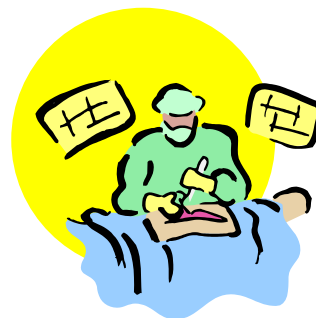
Private Doctors

Some doctors work by themselves in their own offices. Others are part of a private clinic or work in a group with other doctors. Most doctors need proof that a patient can pay for services before they will treat the patient. Patients may pay for services through an insurance plan, Medi-Cal, with cash or a credit card.

Hospitals

Hospital services include the following:

- Surgery
- Treatment for emergencies
- Treatment for special problems that need tests and observation
- Treatment for serious illnesses
- Delivery of babies

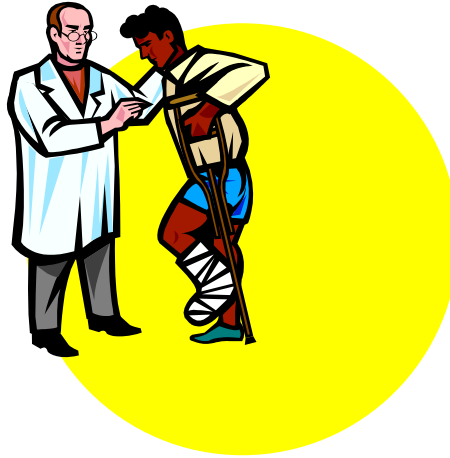


Hospital care is very expensive. They require proof of insurance or ability to pay for their services, except for emergencies.

Emergency Departments

The following is information on emergency rooms:

- They are located in hospitals.
- Give services for life threatening health problems or problems that need to be treated right away.
- No appointment is made.
- Care is given even if you do not have insurance or enough money.
- The hospital will help you find ways to pay the bills after the emergency is over.



Ambulance Service

Ambulance service is available to take you to the hospital and give you medical help. You must pay to use these services. Sometimes an insurance plan will pay for ambulance services.



Your Medical Insurance

In the U.S., each person must pay for his or her own health care. Many Americans pay for their health care with medical insurance. Medical insurance is a system in which you pay a certain amount of money to an insurance company. In return, the insurance company pays all or part of

the medical bills if you become sick. Insurance also helps pay for routine visits to the doctor or a stay in the hospital. People buy the medical insurance through their employer or from a private company.

Refugee Medical Assistance

When you first arrive in the U.S., you will receive health care through a program called Refugee Medical Assistance. This program helps refugees with their medical costs for the first eight months they are in the U.S. For this program, refugees must be single or married but without children.

Your resettlement agency will help you apply for Refugee Medical Assistance. You will fill out forms and learn the rules. It is very important to follow all of the rules of the program so that you and your spouse can get the best medical care possible.

Medi-Cal

Medi-Cal is free medical insurance that newly arrived refugees or asylees can get for a certain period of time. Your resettlement manager can help you find out if you meet the requirements of Medi-Cal.

The following will be considered for getting Medi-Cal:

- **Your immigration and family status**
- **Length of time you have been in the U.S.**
- **Your income**

If you qualify for this medical insurance plan, you will fill out Medi-Cal forms. Four to six weeks after that, you will receive a Medi-Cal insurance card. You must show this card every time you go to the doctor.

Some refugees can get Medi-Cal for up to five years. After that, you will have to buy your own medical insurance.



How Medi-Cal Works

- Choose a “managed care” company. Medi-Cal will give you a list of managed care companies. These companies are also called “health maintenance organizations” or “HMO’s.”
- Choose a “primary care doctor.” The managed care company you choose will give you a list of the doctors who are members of its plan.
- Learn the services paid for by your managed care company.
- Follow all the rules. If you do not, the company will not pay for your health services.
- If you have a problem with your managed care company or your doctor, you can file a complaint. You will not lose your benefits. You cannot be penalized for complaining.



Important Rules of Managed Care

- Always go to your primary care doctor *first*. If you need a different doctor who knows more about an illness or condition, your primary care doctor will send you to that person.
- If you go to another doctor without talking to your primary care doctor first, the managed care company may not pay your medical bills.



Choosing a Managed Care Company

- Talk with your caseworker, ethnic organization, sponsor, and Health and Human Services Agency caseworker about which plan is best for you.
- Ask for written information.
- Choose your managed care company with care.
- Before you sign any papers, be sure you understand everything that is written.

Questions you might ask when choosing a managed care plan are:



- Do the doctors speak my language?
- Are the medical offices near my home?
- Does public transportation go to these offices?
- Do I have to make payments when I receive health services? How much are the payments?
- Can I change doctors if I want to?
- How do I complain if I do not like my plan?



Medical Insurance Through Your Employer

Many people buy health insurance through their employer.

Employers usually offer the managed care plan, but there are other forms of insurance too.



To find out which plan is best for you and your family:

- Talk to the personnel department about the choices.
- Ask for written information about the different plans.
- Ask your co-workers about the insurance plans they use and like.
- Ask your resettlement agency and sponsor for advice.
- Learn about all the available choices.

“Premiums”

You usually pay for medical insurance that you get through work. The employer and the worker share the costs. The payment is taken out of your paychecks. This payment is called a “premium.”

“Co-payments”

A co-payment is a small amount of money (usually \$5 to \$10) that you pay for each visit to the doctor or for each prescription.

Emergency Room Visits

If you visit an emergency room, tell your insurance company within 24 hours. If you do not do this, your insurance company might not pay for the emergency room visit.

The managed care company usually pays all of the doctor’s bill. You pay the co-payment (plus the amount of the premium).

Other Ways to Pay for Healthcare

There are other health care choices available:

- If you are not employed
- If your employer does not offer health insurance and you are not eligible for free medical assistance



There are two options:

- **Pay a fee that you can afford.** You may go to a public health center, community clinic or hospital that allows you to pay according to how much money you are paid at your job.

They will decide on the amount you should pay after you show them your last paycheck and state the size of your family.

- **Free services.** If you are unable to pay, these healthcare providers will provide some free services. If you or a family member is very sick and must have care, you will receive it.

Ask your refugee resettlement manager or sponsor for a list of public health centers, community clinics and hospitals in your area.

Patient Rights and Responsibilities

As a patient, you have the right to:

- Receive health care services regardless of your age, sex and race
- Talk with your health care providers
- Be moved to another health care facility if you wish
- Be informed about all hospital charges, rules and regulations
- Be informed about how to submit complaints
- Have an interpreter when you visit a healthcare provider: Interpreter services include telephone services, bilingual staff, volunteers, and others who are professionally trained. You do not have to pay for an interpreter's services. You do not have to find and bring your own interpreter.
- Be treated with respect and dignity at all times during medical treatment
- Confidentiality: This means that doctors are not allowed to share the things you tell them with people who are not providing care for you. If you are to receive any medical procedure, such as surgery, you must first give your written permission.
- Refuse any treatment

As a patient, you also have important responsibilities. These include the following:

- Arrive on time for all medical appointments.
- Call the doctor's office if you cannot keep your appointment.
- Provide accurate and complete information about your health. This includes the following:
 - The state of your health right now
 - Times when you were sick in the past
 - Times you stayed in a hospital
 - Medicine you take or have taken before
- Allergies
- Any other health matters
- Ask the doctor how to take medicine prescribed to you. Ask, "How much medicine should I take each time?" and "How often?"
- Follow hospital rules and regulations.
- Tell your doctor if you do not understand or do not want to follow medical directions.
- Talk to your caseworker if you did not get the help you needed.



Where to Find Help

- American Association of Poison Control—1-800-222-1222, www.aapcc.org
- California Work (CalWORKs)—1-800-952-5253, http://www.dds.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/california_169.htm
- Infoline of San Diego County (United Way)—1-800-227-0997
- Lead Poisoning Hotline—1-800-424-5323, www.apa.gov
- Legal Aid Society of San Diego—(619) 262-0896
- Poison Control Hotline—1-800-876-4766/1-800-8-POISON, (TTY*) 1-800-972-3323, www.calpoison.org
- San Diego Kids Health Assurance Network—1-800-675-2229, www.co.san-diego.ca.us/sdkhan/ (Affordable Medical & Dental Coverage for Children)

** For the hearing impaired.*

Immunizations



Reasons for Getting Immunizations (Shots)

- To keep people from getting sick or dying from dangerous diseases.
- To rid the world of a disease: All of the disease needs to be gone before people can be safe from getting it. If even only one person has the disease, it can be passed to others.
- To protect children and grandchildren in the future.
- To enroll children in school, pre-school, day care centers and college.



Getting the Immunizations (Shots) You Need

- Find out which immunizations you and your children need. See the list at the end of this section.
- Keep the **Immunization Record** in a safe place.
 - This is a list of the shots you and your children have had.
 - The **date** a shot is given is usually written on the back of the plastic cover of the immunization record.
 - **Keeping track of the immunizations you need is up to you.** Remember the date when you or your child will need another shot. Some agencies will send you a reminder.
 - If this record is lost, all of the shots may need to be repeated.
 - It is needed to enroll your children in school, pre-school, day care centers and college.



Side effects of immunizations (shots):

- There are usually **no** serious or long-lasting side effects from shots. Short-term side effects are very mild:
 - Some soreness at the place where the injection is given.
 - Slight fever
 - Some babies become “fussy”
- Ask questions about any words or actions you do not understand.



Vaccine-Preventable Childhood Diseases

The following is a list of diseases that can be prevented by immunizations (shots):

Diphtheria

- **Spread by coughing, sneezing or close contact**
- **Early symptoms: sore throat, hard to swallow, slight fever, chills**
- **Late symptoms: suffocation, heart failure or paralysis**

Hemophilus Influenza Type B (Hib Disease)

- **Spread by coughing, sneezing or close contact.**
- **It is most serious in infants less than 1 year old.**
- **Symptoms:**
 - **Meningitis-can lead to deafness, mental retardation and death**
 - **Pneumonia**
 - **Infections of the joints, bones, throat and heart covering**

Hepatitis B

- **Spread:**
 - **By blood**
 - **Sexual contact with infected persons**
 - **Infants born to infected mothers**
- **Symptoms: liver disease and cancer, death**

Measles

- **Spread by coughing, sneezing or close contact**
- **Early symptoms: rash, high fever, cough, runny nose, and watery eyes, lasting for 1-2 weeks**
- **Late symptoms: ear infections, pneumonia, encephalitis that can lead to convulsions, deafness, mental retardation, death**

Mumps

- Spread by coughing, sneezing or close contact
- Early symptoms: fever, headache, inflammation of the salivary glands, which results in swelling of the cheeks or jaw
- Late symptoms: permanent hearing loss, meningitis, and in boys it may cause sterility

Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

- Spread by coughing, sneezing or close contact
- Early symptoms: severe spells of coughing, which can interfere with eating, drinking and breathing
- Late symptoms: pneumonia, convulsions, and encephalitis (brain fever)

Polio

- Spread by direct contact with feces of an infected person
- Early symptoms: fever, headaches, sore throat, nausea, stomach aches, stiffness in neck, back and legs
- Late symptoms: paralysis, death

Rubella (German Measles)

- Spread by coughing, sneezing or close contact
- Early symptoms: mild discomfort, slight fever for 24 hours, rash on the face and neck lasting 2-3 days
- Late symptoms:
 - Most serious in pregnant women.
 - Birth defects in the unborn child if Rubella infection occurs early in pregnancy

Tetanus (Lockjaw)

- Spread when the infection enters the body through a wound
- Early symptoms: headache, irritability, stiffness in the jaws and neck
- Late symptoms: severe muscle spasms in the jaw, neck, arms, legs and abdomen

Varicella (Chickenpox)

- Spread by coughing, sneezing and close contact with chickenpox sores
- Early symptoms: a blister-like rash, itching, tiredness and fever
- Late symptoms: pneumonia, brain damage, even death
- People who have had chickenpox can get shingles, a very painful skin rash, many years later.

Hepatitis A

- Spread: direct contact with feces of an infected person
- Early symptoms:
 - Fever, tiredness, nausea, stomach pain, poor appetite, jaundice (yellow skin color)
 - Infected children often show no symptoms
- Late symptoms: serious liver infection

Pneumococcal Disease (PCV7)

- Spread: coughing, sneezing, close contact.
- Symptoms:
 - Blood infections, meningitis, death
 - Especially serious in children less than five years old

Where to Find Help

- Catholic Charities Medical Clinic—(619) 287-9454
- County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency, Immunization Clinics:

Central San Diego

Central Region Public Health Center
5202 University Avenue—(619) 229-5400

East County

El Cajon

East Region Public Health Center
855 E. Madison Avenue—(619)-441-6500

North City

Clairemont

North Claremont Community Resource Center
4635 Claremont Mesa Boulevard—(858) 490-4400

Mira Mesa WIC Office

10670 Treena Street, Suite 109—(858) 490-4400

Pacific Beach

North Central Public Health Center
2440 Grand Avenue—(858) 490-4400

North County

Escondido

North Inland Public Health Center
606 East Valley Parkway—(760) 740-4000

Fallbrook Public Health Office

130 E. Alvarado—(760) 967-4401

Oceanside

North Coastal Public Health Center
104 S. Barnes Street—(760) 967-4401

Ramona Public Health Office

1416 Montecito Road—(760) 740-4000

Rancho Penasquitos

New Hope Church
10330 Carmel Mountain Road—(760) 740-4000

Solana Beach Presbyterian Church

120 Stevens Avenue—(760) 967-4401

South County

Chula Vista

South Region Public Health Center
690 Oxford Street—(619) 409-3110

Dental Care



Keeping Teeth and Gums Healthy

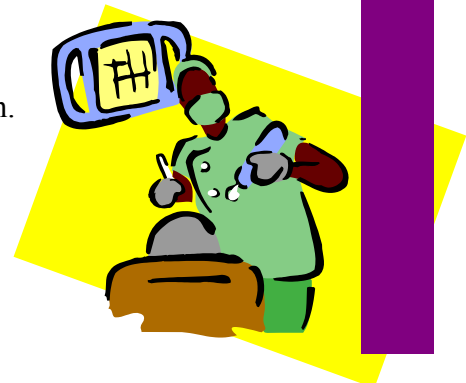
Oral (or dental) health is a part of total health. For adults and children, keeping teeth and gums healthy, means they should:

- Visit a dentist twice a year even if there is no problem.
- Brush teeth after every meal, or at least twice daily.
 - The brush should be soft and fit in your mouth.
- Adults and children over 18 months old should always use toothpaste with fluoride.
- Rinse your mouth with water or mouthwash liquid.
- Floss teeth regularly before brushing and after each meal. Cleaning between your teeth with dental floss will pull out food particles caught between the teeth and gums.
- Eat foods that keep your teeth and gums healthy:
 - Eat many different high nutrient foods, such as fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean meats and low-fat milk/yogurt/cheese.
 - Do not eat a lot of sugary snacks. Eat sugary foods only with meals or with juicy fruits/vegetables, water or cheese.
 - Drink water with food and between meals.



Cavities

- Cavities, or tooth decay, happen when germs infect the teeth.
- Cavities can be painful.
- They need to be treated by a dentist.
- Babies with cavities may refuse to eat or drink.



Dental Care During and After Pregnancy

- Mothers with healthy teeth are less likely to have problems with their pregnancies.
- Gum infection (gingivitis) during pregnancy may cause early labor or low birth-weight babies.
- Healthy teeth are important after the child is born. Bacteria pass from mother's mouth to baby's mouth when foods or spoons are shared or mom uses her mouth to clean a pacifier. This can lead to cavities in the baby.



Dental Care for Babies

- For infants:
 - Wipe gums with a damp clean cloth.
 - See a dentist when your baby at one year of age.
 - Start offering a cup instead of bottle at 6 months of age.
- For babies less than 18 months:
 - Use non-fluoride toothpaste.
 - Babies cannot spit out toothpaste. It is not good for them to swallow fluoride.
- Do not give your baby a bottle at bedtime. Milk or juice that stays on the teeth can cause cavities.
- Try to wean the baby from the bottle after age one.



Denti-Cal

- Most refugees can get dental care through the Denti-Cal program.
- It is part of your medical coverage. No enrollment is needed.
- Contact the Denti-Cal offices to find the nearest dental office.
- You can change dentists at any time if you are not happy with the service you had.



If a dental emergency occurs, act fast. Contact a dentist immediately.

Where to Find Help

- Denti-Cal office—1-800-423-0507
- Share the Care Program (County)—(619) 692-8858

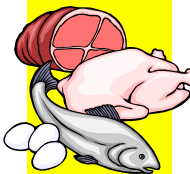
Nutrition and Shopping for Food



Where to Buy Food

- Small stores in your neighborhood may sell food at high prices.
- Supermarkets usually sell food at lower prices.

How to Save Money

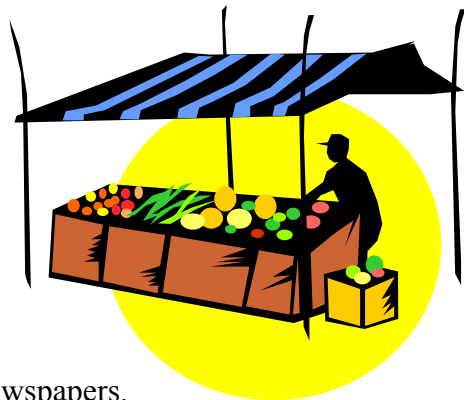


- Make a list of the foods you need before you go to the store. Buy only the food you need.
- Compare prices. Look for the most or best food for a price. Most store brands cost less.
- Buy whole foods. Then fix or cook them yourself. Already prepared foods cost more.

Buy fruits and vegetables that are “in season” (or recently harvested).

Build your meals around lots of rice, pasta, potatoes or other low cost starchy foods. Add vegetables and, if you wish, a small amount of lean meat, poultry or fish.

- Look for sales. If the food on sale will not spoil, buy extra if you have the money.
- Use coupons
 - Look for coupons in magazines and newspapers.
 - They are papers that state an amount of money that can be taken off the price of a product.
 - Give them to a store clerk, and pay less.
 - Most coupons are good for a short time only.
 - Do not use coupons to buy products you do not need.



Eating Well

There are many foods and many ways to build a healthy diet. There is a lot of room for choice. All cultures have their own food traditions. Enjoy the foods you and your family eat, and take action for good health (see “Tips for Healthy Eating” below). Share your good foods with others. Enjoy each other’s company and learn about different food traditions.



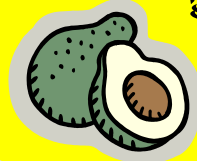
Eating well means eating many different foods in moderate amounts.

Eating well helps you:

- Prevent chronic diseases, like diabetes, heart disease, stroke and cancer
- Stay healthy while you are pregnant
- Have a healthy baby
- Teach your children lifelong, good eating habits
- Prevent eating problems that can be bad for your health:



- Eating too much and becoming overweight
- Eating too little or throwing up to be thin



Healthy Eating

The following are healthy eating tips:

- **Fruits and Vegetables**

(fresh, frozen, canned, or juice): Eat at least **5 servings** a day. Steaming or stir-frying vegetables keeps in the vitamins.



- **Grains and Grain Products** (rice, bread, and pasta): Eat at least **6 servings** a day. Eat mostly whole grains, like oatmeal, whole wheat bread and brown rice.

- **Milk:** Drink and eat **low or non-fat** milk and milk products.

- **Meat:** Eat small amounts of **lean** meat, poultry without skin and fish.

- **Fat:** Use a small amount of fat. Oils, like olive and canola, are healthier than lard or butter.

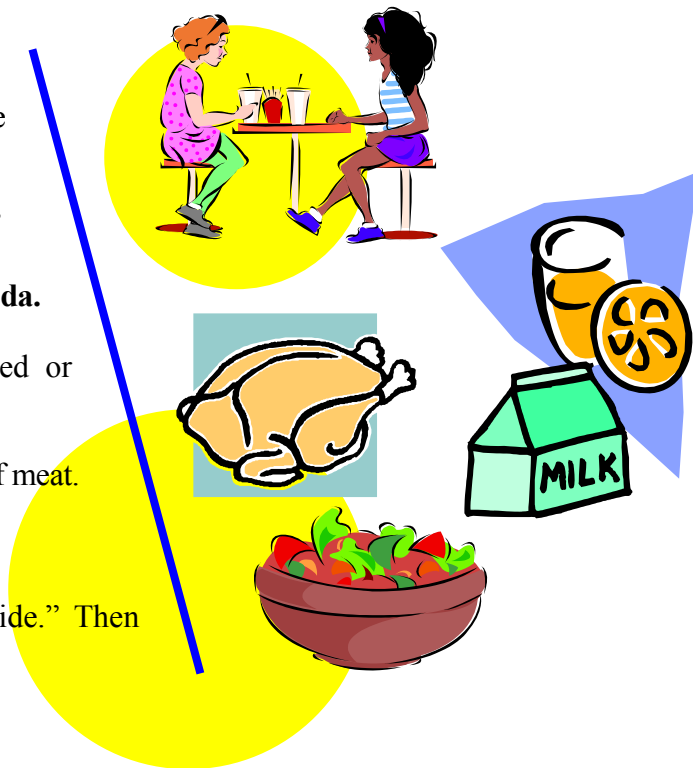
- **Drinks:** Drink water, fruit and vegetable juices more than sodas, coffee and alcohol.

- **Food Product Labels:** Learn to read labels about the fat, fiber, protein, sugar and salt in foods.

- **“Fast Foods”:** Limit fast foods. They are tasty, quick and sometimes at a low cost. However, they also are full of fat, calories and salt that can be unhealthy in large amounts.

For healthier fast food:

- Share the food with another person or take some food to your home. Servings are often large.
- Ask for “no mayonnaise or special sauce.”
- Drink low-fat or nonfat milk or juice, **not soda**.
- Choose foods that are grilled, charbroiled or baked, **not fried**.
- Don’t eat the skin on chicken. Cut the fat off meat.
- Eat salads with low-fat dressing.
- Ask for the dressing or sauce “on the side.” Then add only a small amount.



Where to Find Help

- Websites: www.eatright.org, www.nih.gov, www.foodsecurity.org
- 1-888-WIC WORKS—1-888-942-9675
- Women and Infant Care (WIC)—(619) 583-6053

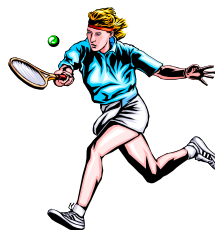
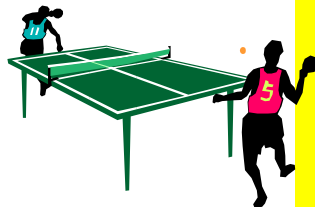
Physical Activity (Exercise)



Daily physical activity (exercise) and relaxation help us stay healthy, look good and live longer. Physical activity is important for people of all ages. If you do not now get any physical activity, talk to your doctor before you begin.

Benefits of Physical Activity

- Decreases risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, colon cancer
- Increases lean muscle mass and decreases body fat
- Helps maintain healthy bones and joints
- Helps you be able to do the activities in your daily life
- Fewer aches and pains
- Helps control weight
- Relieves stress, anxiety and depression
- Improves self-esteem – makes you feel better
- Increases energy
- Improves concentration
- Improves sleep
- Fun—a way to be with friends and family



Finding Time for Physical Activity

It may be hard to find the time, but you can do it. Choose activities you enjoy. You will be more likely to keep doing them.

There is physical activity to suit everyone's taste. Some people join a group. Others find a partner or like to exercise alone.

Avoid injury by starting slowly. Begin and end with gentle stretching. Build up to a comfortable level of activity.

If you are new to exercising or you are reaching toward a fitness goal, expect to feel some discomfort or soreness.

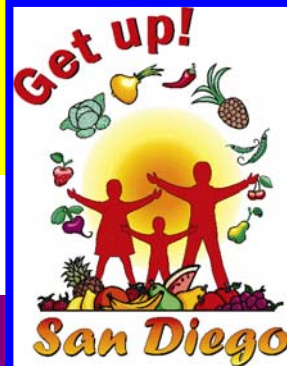
Your mind and spirit need refreshing, too. Prayer, yoga or meditation can reduce stress.



Get Up! San Diego – Get Healthy!

It's a beautiful day – go outside!

- Make family time active time.
- Go to the park with your family.
- Play tag.
- Ride bikes.
- Jump rope.
- Kick a soccer ball.



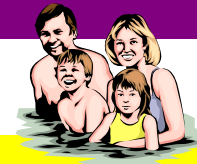
- Play foot ball, catch.
- Walk.
- Walk briskly for 30 minutes.
- Walk the kids to school.
- Walk the dog.
- Walk the mall with a friend.



- Shoot baskets.
- Go to the beach with friends.
- Swim.
- Play in the waves.
- Play volleyball.

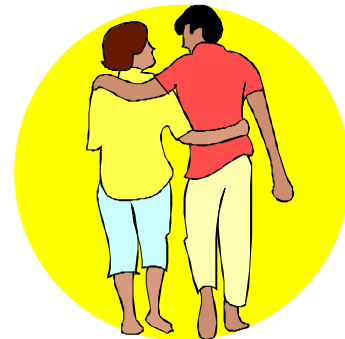


- Walk with co-workers during lunch or breaks.
- Walk the stairs instead of using the elevator/escalator.
- Sneak in a quick walk before you start work or before you get home.
- Walk while doing errands with the kids.
- Walk the rest of the way - park your car or get off the bus a little distance from your destination.



Make good times “be active” times!

- Take a family walk after church, mosque or synagogue.
- Make the celebration or reward a trip to the park rather than food.
- Dance with children, friends, a partner!



Be physically active & get chores done together – more fun & less time

- Plant fruits & vegetables with the kids.
- Rake leaves with your son.
- Wash the car with your daughter.
- Prune the shrubs together.
- Help your mom wash the windows.
- Do a home repair project with your son.



- **Adults need at least 30 minutes a day**
- **Children need at least 60 minutes a day**
- **Do it all at once or in bits throughout the day!**

Where to Find Help

Let your children follow your lead and learn good physical activity habits. To find classes for children or the whole family, call the YMCA, YWCA or the local Parks and Recreation Department. If you or your child has a disability, there are playgrounds, sport programs and family activities for you too.

- Disability Services—(619) 525-8247, (TTY*) (619) 525-8249
- Information Line of San Diego—(619) 230-0997, (TTY*) (858) 300-1311, www.informsandiego.com
- Senior Services—(619) 236-6905
- State Parks—1-800-777-0369, www.cal-parks.ca.gov
- Youth and Teen Services—(619) 525-8219
- YMCA—(858) 292-4034, www.ymca.org
- YWCA—(619) 239-0355, <http://www.ywcasandiego.org>

** For the hearing impaired.*

Mental Health



Mental or emotional health is part of total well being. Feelings are closely connected to physical health.



How to Have Good Mental Health

You can help yourself have good mental health by following these steps:



Physical

- Try to improve your physical health by eating a variety of foods, including fruit, vegetables, whole grains, milk products, lean meat, fish or poultry, and water.
- Get regular physical activity (or exercise).
- Seek treatment if you are not able to cope with daily life.

Spiritual

- Keep your cultural values and beliefs.
- Bring your values and beliefs into your new life.
- Talk about your beliefs, and look for support.

Emotional

- Try to understand your emotions, and talk about your feelings.
- Try to solve your emotional problems.
- Learn to change negative emotions like anger, helplessness and sadness.

Environmental

- Feel safe.
- Be aware of your needs and seek help to meet them.
- Feel comfortable and ask for help.

Managing Stress

The following are tips for managing stress:

- Think about the things that stress you. Make a list.
- Talk with friends or relatives about your problems.
- Do not try to change everything at once. Start small.
- Think about the things that are going well in your life.
- Keep a sense of humor.
- Make some time for yourself everyday.
- Exercise and relaxation can reduce stress.
- Keep family routines, such as eating meals together.
- Get extra support during holidays, anniversaries and birthdays.
- Try to stay out of debt. It can cause you more stress.
- Discrimination increases stress. An example of discrimination is when a person does not get a job because of his/her race or disability. If you see discrimination:
 - Work with others to get support for yourself.
 - Work for the rights of all people.
- If you have too much stress to manage, see a counselor.



Mental Health Problems

In the U.S., mental problems are thought of exactly the same as other medical illnesses. In your new country, it is okay to talk about your feelings and get help with your problems. Your treatment is kept confidential and is not even shared with your family if you wish. Whatever the issue is, try to reach out.

When to Get Help

It may be normal to feel anxiety, stress and depression about life's ups and downs, such as:



- **Marriage**
- **Divorce**
- **Birth of a child**
- **Illness or the death of a loved one.**
- **Leaving your homeland and struggling to adjust to a new culture and life.**



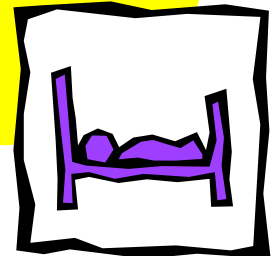
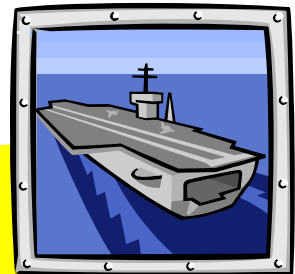
You need to get help if these feelings continue long after the events that caused them. The following are other examples of times when a person should get help:

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Continuing fear, anxiety, nightmares or flashbacks about the things that happened during war or exile.

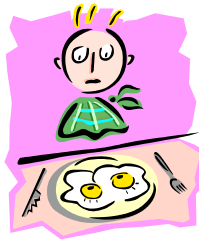
Sleep Problems

- Not being able to fall asleep at night
- Not being able to sleep through the night until morning
- Not being able to go back to sleep after waking up at night
- Being awakened at night by bad dreams or a nightmare



Appetite Problems

- Not feeling hungry
- Only eating if someone makes sure that you do
- Losing weight, noticing that your clothes are too loose
- Feeling hungry all of the time



- Eating more food than you need
- Gaining weight, noticing that your clothes are too tight

Problems With Your Mood

- Feeling sad all the time
- Having crying spells
- Feeling very bad-tempered
- Arguing and yelling with the people you see every day



- Wanting to be alone more than you used to
- Staying away from other people more than you used to
- Sighing a lot

Urgent Mental Health Problems or Crisis

Symptoms include the following:

- Not being able to take care of yourself (such as eating, bathing or dressing)
- Strange behavior
- Hearing voices
- Seeing things that are not there



- Anger that cannot be controlled
- Abuse of alcohol or drugs that causes you to be a danger
- Being or staying in abusive situations
- Thoughts, talk or plans of suicide

Suicide

If you feel suicidal or if someone you know threatens to commit suicide,

Suicide Prevention

Call 911 or 800-Suicide/800-784-2433 Hotline

You do not have to be suicidal to call the Suicide Hotline.
You can call if you are depressed or are trying to help someone else.

How to Get Help for Mental Health Problems

Your case manager can help you and your children find help for problems with relationships with people, stress, low self-esteem and grieving.

Non-Urgent Problems

You can be treated by:

- Community mental health clinics
- A counselor who speaks your language and understands your culture
- A psychiatrist (a doctor who specializes in mental health). A psychiatrist can order medicine that can help you.



Mental Services for Older Adults

Outreach workers help older people in their homes.



Paying for Mental Health Care

Ask about:

- The cost of care
- How the counselor or doctor can help you
- How long the treatment may take



How to pay for mental health care:

- For people with little money who qualify for Medi-Cal, call the County of San Diego Mental Health Services telephone numbers listed on page 89.
- For people with private health care insurance, call your primary care doctors or health plans.

Where to Find Help

- Adult Mental Health (County)—(619) 563-2700
- Children’s Mental Health (County)—(619) 563-2750
- Mental Health Crisis Line (County)—1-800-479-3339
- National Mental Health Association—1-800-969-6642, (TTY*) 1-800-433-5959
- Police, Fire or Ambulance—911
- Senior Services (County)—1-800-510-2020
- Suicide Hotline—(Voice/TTY*) 1-800-784-2433

Pregnancy Care

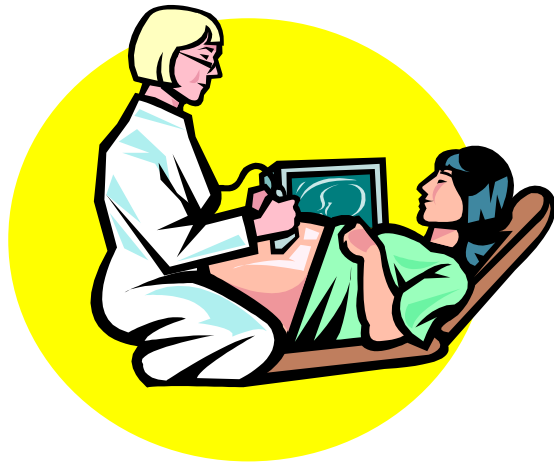


Pregnancy is a special time in your life. It is a time not only for creating a healthy baby, but also for taking good care of yourself. The medical care, rest, exercise and good food you eat can keep you and your baby healthy.

Visit a doctor regularly. Even if you have been pregnant before, any new pregnancy needs special attention. Make time to get the care you and your baby need, even if you are busy with family responsibilities, household chores or other activities.

Programs for Care During and After Pregnancy

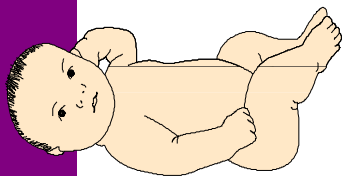
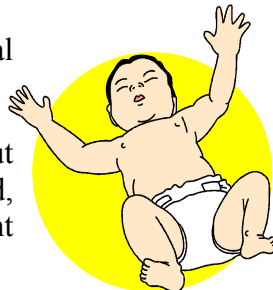
- The Perinatal Program gives bus passes to go to see the doctor.
- Medi-Cal pays for pregnancy care, including doctor visits and the cost of delivery.
- The Aim Program is a low cost program for people with low incomes.
- The WIC (Women, Infants and Children) Program and other programs give nutrition and breastfeeding classes and counseling, both before and after the birth.
- WIC also gives nutritious foods to low-income mothers and children.



Having a Healthy Baby

The following are tips to remember for having a healthy baby:

- Start pregnancy care as soon as you know you are pregnant.
- Eat good foods and get physical activity (exercise) regularly.
- Ask your health care provider about taking vitamins with folic acid, calcium and iron to help prevent pregnancy related problems.
- Morning sickness? Eat small amounts as often as you can.
- Avoid alcohol, smoking and drugs.
- Seek out friends and family to share the joy of your pregnancy.



- Plan ahead for possible changes in your energy level, ability to move or medications.
- Take time to rest every day. It is normal to be tired.
- Talk to your baby. Even before birth, babies are learning the sounds of language.

Get Help for Problems

- If you start to bleed, get medical attention immediately.
- Do not drink, smoke or use drugs.
- If you are stressed or feeling bad, get help.
- If there is violence at home, reach out for help and be safe.

Where to Find Help

- Aim Program—1-800-433-2611
- Babycal—1-800-222-9999
- Perinatal Care Network (County)—(619) 692-8428, 1-800-675-2229
- Domestic Violence Infoline—(619) 234-3164
- National Resource Center for Parents with Disabilities/Through the Looking Glass (serve families with disabilities)—1-800-644-2666, (TTY*) 1-800-804-1616, www.lookingglass.org
- WIC Works—1-888-942-9675

* For the hearing impaired.

Chronic Diseases

Chronic diseases need long-term care from doctors. Diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and asthma are examples of chronic diseases. It is important to keep going back to the doctor if you have a chronic disease.



High Blood Pressure

If the pressure of the blood pumping through your body is too high, it can damage your blood vessels. It can cause a heart attack, brain damage called a stroke, and even death.

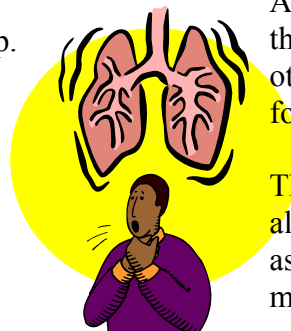
High blood pressure has been called the “silent killer,” because you cannot feel when your blood pressure is high.



Diabetes

Diabetes occurs when the body is not able to make or use a hormone called “insulin.” This causes the sugar in the blood to go higher than it should. A person with diabetes can prevent serious health problems, such as blindness and heart disease, with the following activities:

- Control blood sugar. If medicine (pills or insulin shots) is needed to control blood sugar:
 - Never skip doses.
 - Never stop taking the medicine without talking to the doctor.
- Follow the diet ordered by your doctor.
- Get physical activity (or exercise) every day.
- If you smoke or use tobacco, stop.



Asthma

Asthma is a disease of the lungs and airways that causes breathing problems. Asthma “attacks” are caused by things that bother the lungs, such as cigarette or other smoke, dust, cold air, feathers, foods or mold.

The doctor may give you tests for allergies to find out what causes your asthma. Your doctor can give you medicine that will help the asthma.

Angina

Angina is chest pain caused when the blood vessels around the heart are damaged.

Preventing High Blood Pressure or Angina

If you have high blood pressure or angina or want to help prevent it, you can help yourself with the following activities:

- Eat healthful foods.
- Get physical activity (or exercise) every day.
- If you smoke or use tobacco, stop.
- If the doctor orders medicine for you, be sure to take it as directed. Never skip doses, and never stop taking your medicine without talking to your doctor.



Where to Find Help

- American Heart Association (For information about heart problems)—(619) 291-7454
- American Lung Association (For asthma information)—(619) 297-3901
- California Diabetes Control Program—1-800-828-8293
- The Whittier Institute for Diabetes—1-877-944-8843, www.whittier.org

Medication



In the U.S., medicines are divided into two groups. Some are called “over-the-counter medicines.” Other medicines can be ordered only by a doctor’s prescription. Call your doctor’s office if you have questions about any medicine.

Questions may include the following:

- You think you may be having a bad reaction to the medicine.
- You think the medicine is not working. Sometimes the doctor needs to change a medicine to find the one that works best for you.
- Your health problem continues longer than length of time you are supposed to take the medicine.



Over-the-Counter Medicines

- Use when the medical problem is not very serious, such as mild pain or a cold.
- You can buy them at a store without seeing a doctor and getting a doctor’s order.
- Always read the label to learn the following:
 - o What is in the medicine.
 - o The amount of medicine to take. Do not take more than the amount written on the label.
 - o The length of time it is safe to take the medicine. Call your doctor if your health problem continues for longer than the amount of time stated.
 - o Possible side effects. Medicine can cause problems for some people.
 - o The expiration date. Do not use the medicine after this date.
- **Do not take over-the-counter medicines and herbal remedies until you talk with your doctor. They can cause you problems if you:**
 - o Have a serious medical condition.
 - o Already take a prescription medicine. It may be dangerous to take some over-the-counter medicines and herbal remedies with certain prescription medicines.



Prescription Medicines (Medicines ordered by your doctor)



- Your doctor orders these medicines just for you.
- Do not share prescription medicines with your family and friends.
- Never take medicine the doctor ordered for someone else.
- Read the label for the expiration date (date after which the medicine should not be used).
- **Antibiotics:**
 - If your doctor orders antibiotics, you must finish the medicine your doctor prescribes. Do this even if you are feeling better.
 - If you do not, the medicine will not work, and the infection may come back.
 - If the infection comes back, the same medicine may not work the next time (the germs become “resistant” to the antibiotic).

Generic and Brand Name Medicines

In the U.S., many medicines have both a generic name and a brand name. Some of the differences between them are listed below. Remember to read the labels.

Generic Medications

- They are made of the same ingredients as the brand name medicines but usually cost less.
- The generic name is listed in small print under “active ingredients.”



Brand Name Medications

- Brand names are advertised.
- The companies make a high profit on them.
- The brand name is usually in large print on the bottle or box.
- Brand names are easier to say than the generic names. For example:
 - “Advil” and “Motrin” are brand names, and ibuprofen is the generic name.
 - “Tylenol” is the brand name, and acetaminophen is the generic name.



Medicine Refills

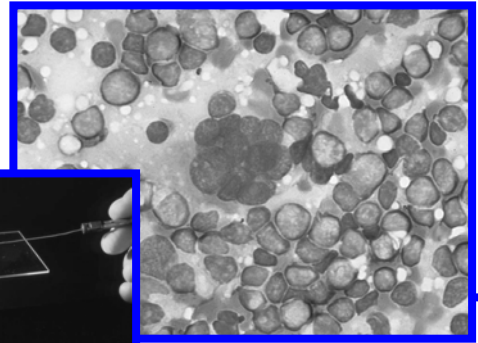
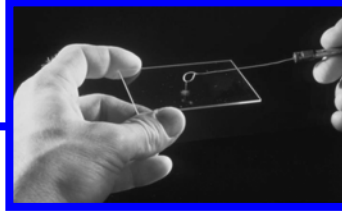
Getting more of the medicine your doctor ordered is called a “refill.” Some medicine refills need special authorization from your health plan. If the pharmacy tells you the medicine is not authorized, call your doctor or health plan for help.

To take your medicine without missing a day:

- Call the pharmacy for refills a few days before you finish the medication.
- Then you can get the refill before you finish the medicine you have.



Infectious Diseases



What Are Infectious Diseases?

- Infectious diseases can pass from one person to another.
- They include diseases like tuberculosis, hepatitis and intestinal parasites.
- It is important to be tested to find out if you have a infectious disease.
 - Testing helps you, your family, and your community stay healthy.
 - If you need medicine, do not worry. Having a infectious disease will not affect your immigration status.

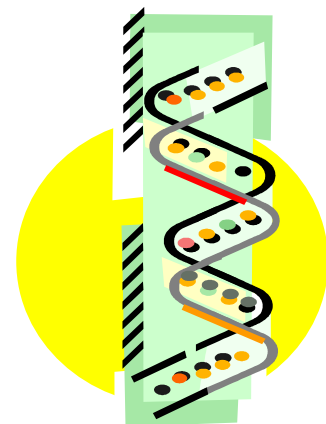


Tuberculosis (TB)

Most refugees come from countries where TB is common.

There are two kinds of TB:

- **Inactive TB:** People are not sick with inactive TB germs. They cannot give it to other people.
- **Active TB:** With active TB, the germs can be passed to other people. A person with active TB must get treatment.



TB Tests

- **Tuberculosis Skin Test (TST):**

A very small amount of liquid is injected just under the skin on your forearm. After 48 to 72 hours, you return to the doctor's office or the clinic. The test is positive (TB germs have been found) if:

- There is a red bump on your forearm.
- There is a hardened area on the skin.
- The area measures 10 mm or more.

- **Chest X-Ray:**

- If the skin test is positive you need a chest x-ray (a picture taken of your lungs).
- If your TB germs **are not active**, your chest x-ray usually will be normal.



- **Sputum Culture:**

If your chest x-ray is **not normal**, you will probably need to cough up a little phlegm from your lungs. It will



be tested for TB germs. Some results may be ready in a few days, but final culture results may take weeks.

TB Treatment

There are two types of TB treatment. Both take months to complete.



- **Inactive TB Infection:**

- If you treat the inactive TB infection, you will not get sick with active TB in the future. If you do not get sick with active TB, you cannot pass the germs to your family, friends or coworkers.



- It is usually treated with one medicine, isoniazid (INH).
- Latent TB Infection (LTBI) treatment is for people with TB infection but no active disease.

- **Active TB Infection:**

- It usually (but not always) includes symptoms, such as a cough, fever, poor appetite, night sweats and fatigue.
- It needs treatment with several medicines, including INH.
- After taking the medicine for 2 to 3 weeks, the TB germs cannot be passed to other people.

Illness Caused By Food

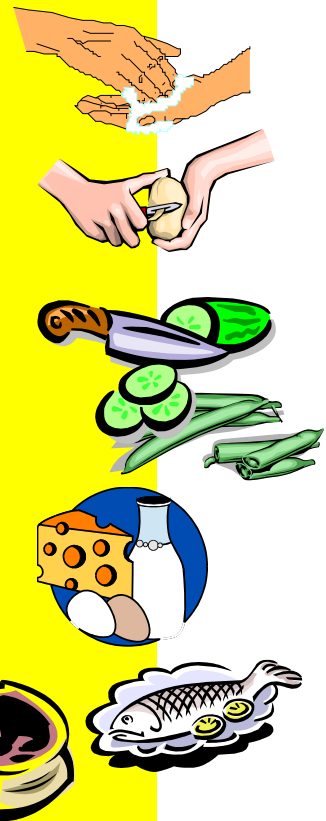


This illness is sometimes called “food poisoning.” It happens when a person eats food that is infected with germs. Usually 12-48 hours after eating infected food, a person feels sick in their stomach, goes to the toilet often, throws up, or has other symptoms.

Illnesses that come from infected food can be especially dangerous for babies and older people. The names of some infections found in food are Hepatitis A, E. Coli, and Salmonella.

Preventing Illness Caused By Food

- Wash your hands before fixing and eating food.
- Wash raw vegetables and fruits before cutting and peeling them.
- Keep meats away from fruits and vegetables while you are fixing them. Use different cutting boards and counter top spaces.
- Use hot, soapy water to wash all knives, dishes and spaces used for fixing food.
- Use only pasteurized and certified cheeses and other milk products.
- Keep foods with meat, milk or egg products in the refrigerator.
- Cook all meats and fish completely.

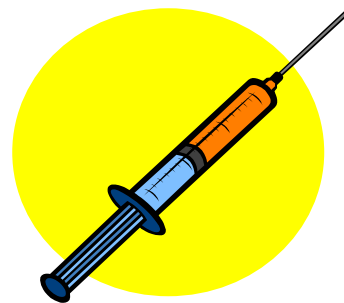


Intestinal Parasites

Many refugees come from countries where intestinal parasites (“worms”) are common. If laboratory tests find intestinal parasites in your stool, you may need medicine.

Hepatitis B and C

- Hepatitis B and C are passed from one person to another by contact with blood or body fluids, including during sexual intercourse.
- They can cause liver cancer, and even death.
- **Prevention:** To help keep from getting Hepatitis B, you can get a series of shots.



Sexually Transmitted Infections

If you or your partner has sex with other people, or if you have had sex with more than one person in the past, you should get a test for a sexually transmitted infection. These infections may lead to serious health problems if they are not treated. Infection with the HIV virus can cause AIDS.

Examples of these infections include the following:

- HIV
- Syphilis
- Gonorrhea
- Chlamydia



Where to Find Help

- HIV Testing (County)—(619) 296-2120
- Sexually Transmitted Disease Control (County)—(619) 692-8550
- Tuberculosis Control (County)—(619) 692-8600

For additional copies of this guidebook, please contact:

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Health and Human Services Agency
Public Health Services
Medical Health Quality Assurance
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